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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Political History of Outer Space

by Solly Zuckerman

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CORRESPONDENCE

RENTING WRONGS

To the editors:

TRB's analysis of rent control and property rights ("Political Property Rights," April 8) overlooks the cases where rent control is morally *and* economically necessary, e.g., where a captive market of low-income elderly or student renters are unable to "vote with their feet," as TRB seems to prefer, and where a city plan forbids or precludes developing new rental housing. It's hard to imagine Henry George's 19th-century nostrums offering much of a solution for today's market distortions of rent control. His "single-tax" concept would replace our present system of taxing developed property by value with a levy on the undeveloped land itself. This would certainly discourage the holding of large tracts of undeveloped land, a problem with the railroads in George's time. But today it merely offers a windfall in tax reductions to those fortunate enough to own highly developed, and therefore highly taxed property—like New York City landlords.

JOEL BELLMAN
Los Angeles, California

MARIO SCENARIO

To the editors:

Your cover story on New York governor Mario Cuomo ("Meet Mario the Moderate," April 8) was long on puffery and empty of substance. Beneath Cuomo's polished exterior, cracks begin to emerge. First, New York's economy is deteriorating. Between 1975 and 1984, the Empire State ranked 43rd out of the 50 states in terms of new private-sector job creation. Second, New York experienced a loss of 650,000 citizens. Twenty years ago we were number one in population; today the state ranks second. In concise terms, both business and the people are voting with their feet.

Why hasn't our illustrious governor exerted the leadership to reverse these problems? Quite frankly, in addition to high taxes as the root cause, the governor is preoccupied with White House aspirations. Mario Cuomo is a typical politician, and a masterful one to boot.

STEVE BARNHOORN
Honeoye, New York

SOVIET JEWS

To the editors:

I applaud your concern for the ethnic and national groups in the Soviet Union that are threatened with extinction by Leninism and the "new Soviet man" ("Not Only Jews," April 8).

However, charges that Jewish goals vis-à-vis the Soviet Union are too narrowly focused on Soviet Jewry are unwarranted. What does TNR expect Jewish organizations to do at a time when official Soviet anti-Semitism is rising to new heights in an active campaign to crush every vestige of Jewish life within its borders? The urgency of the situation *demands* a narrow focus, not a broad one. (Besides, a narrow focus, like the diaphragm of a camera lens, produces a greater depth of field.)

Furthermore, your contention that American Jewish organizations are trying to strike a bargain with the Soviet leadership—détente for emigration—is utter nonsense. Rather than the "anti-Semitic fantasy" your editorial is so preoccupied with, the advertisement cited implicitly refers to a group of political realities that determine and shape American foreign policy with the Soviet Union. Among these are the Jackson-Vanik Trade Act of 1974, and House Congressional Resolutions 63 and 79, all of which the Soviet leadership, unlike the editorial staff of TNR, are acutely aware.

BRUCE BRODERSEN
Portland, Oregon

AND TO THE REPUBLIC

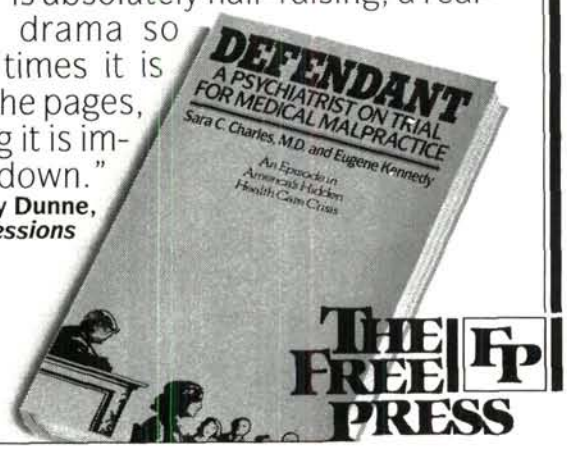
To the editors:

Some of us who keep warm reading both *The American Spectator* and your own honorably named magazine were surprised to see you attacking R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr. ("Chicken McMencken," April 8) for referring to the United States as "the Republic."

SETH LIPSKY
Brussels, Belgium

ANATOMY OF A MALPRACTICE SUIT.

℞ A distraught young woman hurls herself from her apartment house roof. She survives, but is crippled for life. Then she sues her psychiatrist for ten million dollars – for medical malpractice. Startling, but true. And all too typical of America's hidden crisis in health care. *Defendant*, the dramatic first-hand account by the psychiatrist in the case "is absolutely hair-raising, a real-life courtroom drama so painful that at times it is difficult to turn the pages, yet so absorbing it is impossible to put down."
– John Gregory Dunne, author of *True Confessions*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FROM WASHINGTON

SERFDOM AND SEAT BELTS

The decisions a democratic society must make for itself generally come down to a trade-off between freedom and other values. Freedom to live your own life and to spend your own money as you please versus the rights of other people and the good of society as a whole. No one can prove that his or her preferred trade-off is the right one. Sometimes, though, you can look at how society has made the trade-off on a particular issue and say that, by anyone's standards, the process and the result are a puzzling advertisement for democracy.

Consider, for example, the problem of automobile accidents, which kill more than 40,000 Americans every year. Actually, we've made great progress over the past couple of decades. The number of fatalities per million vehicle miles is half what it was in 1965. Much of the credit goes to one man—Ralph Nader—who almost single-handedly transformed the American automobile. Nader undoubtedly has saved more American lives than were lost in the Vietnam War. Still, 40,000 deaths is too many. Debate about where to go next has swirled around four options.

Option one is already in effect: the 55 mile-per-hour speed limit. According to a 1984 government-sponsored study, it saves 2,000 to 4,000 lives a year at a cost of one billion extra driving hours, or seven hours a year per driver. That works out to about 40 years of extra driving for every life saved. Since the average life expectancy of fatal accident victims is also about 40 years, the lost time is a wash. In effect, the speed limit is a sensible insurance program: everyone gives up a few hours a year to reduce the risk of losing all remaining hours.

But we have this sensible insurance program only by accident. The 55 mph speed limit began during the energy crisis and only later became identified with saving lives. If it weren't for OPEC, we'd probably still be debating it. What we're debating now is whether to raise the limit back to 65 mph on lightly traveled interstate highways. That same study calculates the cost of the lower limit on these roads at about a century of lost time per life saved: a bad bargain. Yet we're as incapable of sensibly reforming the speed limit as we might have been of enacting it.

Option two, the current favorite, is raising the drinking age to 21. This reform is sweeping the states. Every goody-goody, governor, and president of the United States looking for an apple-pie issue has come out in favor of it. The National Safety Council estimates that a nationwide drinking age of 21 would save 730 lives a year.

Option three is mandatory seat belt laws. New York's, the first in the nation, went into effect at the beginning of this year and apparently is cutting traffic fatalities by almost a third. The Department of Transportation figures that a nationwide mandatory seat belt law with 70 percent compliance would save 6,000 to 7,500 lives a year.

Finally, there are "passive restraints," meaning air bags or automatic seat belts. The government has been actively trying to decide whether to require these since 1969. Successive secretaries of transportation keep overturning one another, only to be overturned themselves by the courts, in an epic parody of democratic decision making. What the Transportation Department optimistically labeled its "Final Regulatory Impact Statement," issued last year, concluded that automatic seat belts would add about $40 to the cost of a car, and front-seat air bags would add $320.

The current transportation secretary, Elizabeth Dole, has ruled that automakers must provide some kind of front-seat passive restraints starting in 1989, unless two-thirds of the states pass mandatory seat belt laws by that time. The auto companies, dreading air bags, have launched an intensive campaign to get mandatory seat belt laws passed in time. Passive restraints presumably would save even more lives than mandatory seat belt laws, since you would have to actively disconnect them to avoid their use. The main advantage of air bags over automatic seat belts is that

continued on page 42

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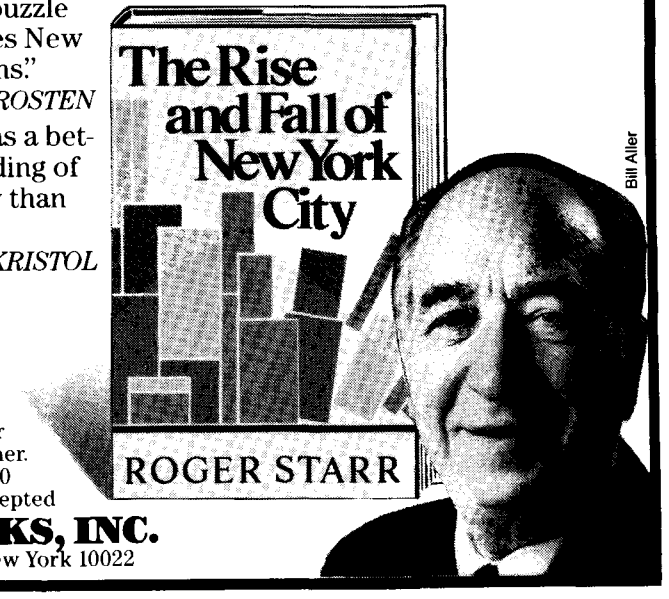

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2 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... On renters' rights, Mario's wrongs, &c.

4 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ..... SERFDOM AND SEAT BELTS
Is there freedom to be foolish?

7 **THE EDITORS** ..... INNOCENCE ABROAD
What President Reagan doesn't know about history would fill a European trip.
NOTEBOOK
About a better budget and a family fascist.

8 **FRED BARNES** ..... ON THE HILL: RAGING REPRESENTATIVES
The new partisan strife, and why it's a good thing.

10 **ALEX HEARD** ..... POSTCARD KANSAS: HOMAGE TO JELLO
The world's most pathetic tourist attractions.

12 **DAVID A. BELL** ..... LE GERRYMANDER
A tale of two Mitterrands.

13 **ANTONY J. BLINKEN** ..... THE MERCEDES RELIEF ACT
A bill to help poor German carmakers.

14 **MICKEY KAUS** ..... A UNION FOR YUPPIES
Hollywood writers cast off their proletarian chains.

16 **DOROTHY WICKENDEN** ..... BOWDLERIZING THE BARD
It's the prick of noon. Are your kids off reading Shakespeare?

20 **TINA ROSENBERG** ..... FOOL OF SHIPS
John Lehman, secretary of the Navy, is one of Washington's slickest operators. His scheming has cost us billions and weakened our defense.

24 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: LET THERE BE LIGHTNESS
Almost You, a true comedy about turning 30.

25 **SOLLY ZUCKERMAN** ..... THE POLITICS OF OUTER SPACE
The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age
by Walter A. McDougall

32 **DAVID KALSTONE** ..... A CRITIC APART
Randall Jarrell's Letters
edited by Mary Jarrell

36 **JACK NEWFIELD** ..... THE BRUISED APPLE
The Rise and Fall of New York City
by Roger Starr

38 **JANE KENYON** ..... POEM *No Steps*

40 **PETER SINGER** ..... A DOG'S WORST ENEMY
Dominance and Affection: The Making of Pets
by Yi-Fu Tuan

43 **WASHINGTON DIARIST** ..... NO DOGS OR JOURNALISTS

COVER by Taylor Jones for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 25.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
JUNE 3, 1985

INNOCENCE ABROAD

Ronald Reagan has never let the facts get in the way of a good story, and in his recent sweep across Europe he showed just how little he is troubled by the particularly messy facts of recent European history. First came the Bitburg controversy before his departure, and his assertion that fallen German soldiers were victims of Nazism "just as surely as" the dead of the concentration camps. His advisers papered that one over as well as they could by shortening his visit at the Bitburg cemetery and adding a stop and a speech at the site of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. But then he was welcomed in Spain with headlines about an interview with Scripps Howard newspapers last October, in which he appeared to prefer Franco to the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War. Speaking of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade of Americans who fought for the Republicans against Franco, Reagan had said, "If you get into the moral issue of it . . . I would say that the individuals that went over there were, in the opinions of most Americans, fighting on the wrong side."

Now, it is just possible, with hindsight, to make a convoluted case for Franco. It goes something like this: Franco became the "authoritarian" dictator of Spain after a vicious civil war. Granted, he received substantial support from Hitler and Mussolini, which helped him crush the legitimate Republican government, and he ruled Spain for 36 years as a brutal dictator. Nevertheless, he did at least indirectly pave the way for the reestablishment of liberal democracy in Spain following his death in 1975. The Republicans, on the other hand, came to be dominated by pro-Soviet Communists during the civil war. If they had won, Spain today would be as firmly entrenched in the Soviet bloc as Bulgaria or Cuba, lacking any hope for reform. But Reagan did not make this argument. For him it apparently suffices that the Spanish Republicans (like the Sandinistas) had a strong Marxist-Leninist center. That makes the other side right, even if it was allied with the Nazis.

This is not the first time that President Reagan's historical judgment has been called into question. During one news conference several years ago, for example, he erroneously asserted that "North and South Vietnam had been, previous to colonization, two separate countries," that Ho Chi Minh had "refused to participate" in the Vietnamese elections of 1955 (actually it was the American-backed South Vietnamese regime that refused), and that John F. Kennedy had sent Marines to Vietnam. More recently, he has taken to equating Nicaragua's *contras* with America's Founding Fathers. In Europe, where political leaders are usually much better schooled in history than American leaders, Reagan's apparently tenuous grasp of history draws both gasps and guffaws.

And yet, for all his problems with the facts, Reagan does have a sense of history. Indeed, according to Harvard University's Professor Alan Brinkley, he makes use of history more than any president in this century. In his first inaugural address, he called on the ghosts of Churchill, Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson, Joseph Warren, and the soldiers of World War I, World War II, and Vietnam. In both of his presidential campaigns, he frequently evoked both FDR and JFK, even suggesting that his own ideological crusade is their heir. In his second inaugural address last January, he served up vignettes of the deaths of Adams and Jefferson, of Valley Forge and the Alamo, and concluded with the homiletic words, "History is a ribbon always unfurling; history is a journey. And as we continue on our journey we think of those who traveled before us . . . we see and hear again the echoes of our past."

The history presented by Reagan is not ideological. It is not the world according to Jeane Kirkpatrick. Rather, it is the traditional, mythological American history of early 20th-century schoolbooks. It presents the American Revolution as the perfect model for political change. It exalts the God-fearing idealism of the Founding Fathers, and, by extension, of presidents like Woodrow Wilson (or even Roosevelt and Kennedy). With its explicit goal of reclaiming the American heritage and restoring lost American values, it provides the touchstone for Reagan conservatism.

Reagan's stubborn desire for an act of reconciliation with the Germans is entirely consistent with this vision. In his fiercely American view of history, World War II is

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primarily an American event—that is to say, a war in which Americans went overseas to fight, in which they prevailed because of their superior bravery and national commitment, and for which they can now forgive their properly chastened onetime foes. For all of Reagan's identification of himself at Bergen-Belsen with Jews, Afghans, and Miskito Indians, he really identifies himself with the GIs, with the U.S. soldiers and veterans he manages to praise in nearly every speech. For Reagan, the other, overshadowing events of World War II, which punished Jews and Eastern Europeans, not to mention Spanish democrats, seem to have less significance. Quite simply, they did not have an obvious and direct effect on Americans. Even the spread of totalitarianism, which now figures so importantly in Reagan's worldview, is seen primarily as it affects Americans: in Cuba, in Vietnam, and now purportedly in Nicaragua.

Reagan's suspicions about the Abraham Lincoln Brigade spring from the same source. Unlike the GIs, the brigade did not venture abroad to fight for the United States, or for a clear-cut example of democracy. They fought for a motley, divided alliance dominated by elements hostile to what Reagan believes to be fundamental American values. So it is not surprising that Reagan automatically considers the Spanish Republicans the wrong side.

Though obviously Reagan himself is not an isolationist, his sense of history is essentially limited to one country. His monumental Bitburg blunder and his slip about the Spanish Civil War reveal his lack of innate understanding of other nations. This is a fundamental weakness of Reagan's foreign policy, one that even clever advisers and exhaustive briefing books can't always hide.

NOTEBOOK

□ THE 1986 BUDGET that emerged from the Republican-controlled Senate, with the approval of President Reagan, is the most encouraging legislative development in a long time. It would cut the projected deficit by $56 billion next year and by almost $300 billion over the next three years. The financial markets reacted buoyantly to this evidence that perhaps the government can, after all, deal seriously with the most serious threat to our prosperity. If the House can agree on something fairly similar, there is hope for lower interest rates, lower unemployment, continued low inflation, and renewed growth. We urge the Democratic-controlled House not to torpedo the Senate-Reagan deal. After all, it represents two remarkable concessions by the president. First, he has agreed to a defense budget with no real increase over last year. Second, he has backed down from his promise not to touch Social Security. This promise, of course, was forced on him by the Democrats. In essence, this budget asks Reagan to back down on his favorite big-ticket item—defense—and asks the Democrats to back down on theirs—Social Security. On lesser spending programs of sundry sorts such as Amtrak, it generally splits the difference between Dave Stockman's desire to see them eliminated and the desire of their supporters to protect them in full. Programs truly directed at the poor are generally saved or even expanded. This budget is, in short, a true compromise, with difficult concessions asked of both sides. It is not ideal from anyone's point of view. But it is a bigger step than anyone would have thought possible a few weeks ago toward the all-important goal of reducing the deficit.

□ THIS WEEK'S BITBURG MEMORIAL WREATH goes to NBC for its upcoming miniseries on Benito Mussolini. If the May 20 *Newsweek* has got it right, "NBC's forthcoming treatment of Mussolini (starring George C. Scott) will downplay all that nasty fascist politics and concentrate on the Duce's loving relationship with his children."

ON THE HILL

RAGING REPRESENTATIVES

TEARS WERE trickling down the face of the ordinarily impassive Representative Robert Michel, the Republican chief, when he spoke to House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill. It was late April. Michel and half a dozen Republican congressional leaders had come to O'Neill's office near the House floor to make a special plea. Michel demanded nothing. He only implored O'Neill and the other Democratic leaders to understand how emotional Republicans were over the plan to seat Democrat Francis X. McCloskey as the congressman from Indiana's Eighth District. Twice Republican officials in Indiana had declared Richard McIntyre, the Republican candidate, the victor over McCloskey in last November's election. Then a House panel staged its own recount and concluded, on a party-line vote, that McCloskey was the winner. Republican House members were beside themselves. Why, we already have a 17-minute movie on the whole controversy, Republican Whip Trent Lott told O'Neill.

"A what?" O'Neill interrupted. "What do you mean, a 17-minute movie?"

Representative Guy Vander Jagt, who runs the House Republican campaign committee, explained that the six-hour public session of the House panel had been pared down to 17 pointed minutes showing how the vote counting stopped abruptly once McCloskey inched ahead. The movie was shown to the Republican caucus, he added. Incredible, unconscionable, outrageous, shouted Representative Tony Coelho, the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. "You've been telling us that your side is so heated about the Indiana race," he said, and yet, "you've been inciting them.

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Feelings are running high these days in the House of Representatives. Raw partisanship has replaced the chummy, we-can-work-it-out attitude. No cozy compromise was reached on the Indiana seat; Democrats had the votes, and with no remorse they seated their man. Republicans plot revenge. Ideological polarization—Republicans veering right, Democrats drifting left—is also increasing. There is more party combat, more petty squabbling, more ill will. Camaraderie is at a low point.

Yet all the sound and fury has made the House a better place. Debates are sharper (and meaner, too). Issues are more clearly drawn—tax reform, Nicaragua, minority party rights, to name three. And cop-out compromises are less eagerly pursued. As you might expect, the consensus in Washington is quite the opposite. Pious laments over the surge in partisanship are heard daily, particularly from those who pursue it most aggressively. "Some of the young turks on the Republican side feel they've accomplished something if they've caused the House to waste 20 minutes," moans Majority Leader Jim Wright. A raucous "minority in the minority" is causing the trouble, says Wright, citing conservative zealots like Newt Gingrich and Vin Weber. "These young fellows think confrontation is a way to get things done rather than cooperation."

IN TRUTH, it is. Take the McCloskey-McIntyre case. Republicans didn't get their man seated and they didn't get a new election; that wasn't in the cards. But their noisy protests, climaxing in a mass walkout from the House floor, attracted attention to their minority plight as nothing has in decades. They are, after all, cheated on committee assignments and staff, subjected to unfair scheduling of hearings and floor debates, and, more broadly, shafted by gerrymandering and malapportionment. Would a few hours of high-toned speeches have left the impression that Republicans suffer as the minority? Not on your life.

Coming leadership fights in both parties are most responsible for the new partisanship. Republican firebrands like Gingrich and aggressive young liberal Democrats like Thomas Downey have exploited the fights to create the refreshing new atmosphere. They've done it the old-fashioned way, terrorizing their leaders into line by threats of a challenge to their posts. Michel is no Reaganite conservative, but he's been forced to imitate one time after time. "He had to get out in front of his troops on account of he's their leader," says Democrat Morris Udall.

Some conservatives groused that Michel was still too meek in the Indiana controversy. They criticized him for returning to the House floor after the mass walkout and shaking McCloskey's hand. "If I can't go and shake a man's hand, I don't want to serve in this body anymore," he told a closed meeting of all 182 Republican representatives. Only a dozen applauded this bravado; the rest sat on their hands.

Michel probably won't have a challenger for minority leader after the 1986 election, but he's acting as if he might. In any case, he may be joined by more militant lieutenants in the Republican leadership. Lott is marking time until John Stennis, who is 83 and recently had a cancerous leg amputated, vacates his Mississippi Senate seat. Jack Kemp, third in command, may drop out of a leadership role to pursue the presidency. Richard Cheney, who ranks fourth and is likely to move up, used to be considered a moderate accommodationist (he was President Ford's chief of staff), but has changed his tune. "Confrontation fits our strategy," Cheney says. "Polarization often has very beneficial results. If everything is handled through compromise and conciliation, if there are no real issues dividing us from the Democrats, why should the country change and make us the majority?"

If Vander Jagt should step down as Republican campaign chief, Weber is a good bet to replace him. But what about the biggest noisemaker of all—Gingrich? "He's a very creative guy, but he couldn't get elected dogcatcher on our side of the aisle," insists a Republican leader.

STILL, about half the Republican members fancy Gingrich's attack-dog tactics. This means his bloc—Gingrich isn't so much the leader as the scout—is large enough to force the Republican leadership to bend its way more often than not. Among Democrats, the liberal bloc is even larger—a good 60 percent of the 253 members—and more powerful. It is not the tail wagging the dog; it is the dog. And no one is responding more attentively to this fresh political fact of life than Wright, who is running to become House speaker in 1986 when O'Neill retires.

Wright claims "firm commitments" from 191 House members. "That is more than three-fourths and just short of four-fifths of the Democrats," he boasts. But his mere act of soliciting commitments suggests he is nervous about a challenge. And well he should be. He has scrambled to the left on two litmus test issues, the MX and Central America.

Wright has a hawkish past. He was a founder of the hard-line Coalition for a Democratic Majority. He voted for the MX in 1982, along with three other House Democratic leaders: Whip Thomas Foley, Deputy Whip Bill Alexander, and caucus chairman Richard Gephardt (but not Tip O'Neill). In 1983 he served on the Kissinger Commission, which supported President Reagan's Central America policy.

No more Reaganite votes for Wright, though. He voted against the MX this year (Foley, Alexander, and Gephardt switched with him), and he opposes any military or "humanitarian" aid that would help the *contras* persist in fighting the Sandinistas. What if Wright hadn't jumped to the left on these two issues? "He couldn't be elected speaker," says a Democratic leader. "It's that simple." Wright isn't taking any chances on Star Wars either, should it reach litmus test status. After *The Washington Post* quoted him last January as backing Reagan's plans for a strategic missile defense, he distributed a letter expressing grave doubts about the cost and value of such a system.

Wright, a bombastic orator with expressive, bushy eyebrows and a sarcastic smile, denies he's changed his views for political gain. But who in politics has ever admitted to

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such a thing? "If I've got to go around pandering to people and curry their favor to be speaker, then I don't need their favor," he told reporters at a Washington press breakfast recently. Pandering or not, Wright is adept at collecting support. He delights liberals with his windy, sneering attacks on President Reagan.

Wright isn't a shoo-in for speaker. He's dependent on Democratic good fortunes. If Democrats lose the Senate again next year and fail to make impressive gains in the House, the party will be looking for younger, flashier leaders. "Wright's not what you'd call today's man," says a Democratic official, and Wright will be 64 in 1986. Gephardt, who is passing up a chance to run for the Senate next year, will be 45. For now, he's an announced supporter of Wright. But his aides recite a scenario in which a bad Democratic showing in 1986 leads to a challenge of Wright. Enticing the more liberal House Democrats would be key to such a challenge. What holds Gephardt back is fear of defeat. Once you lose a leadership fight, you're a spent force in the House. Just ask Mo Udall, who ran for speaker in 1969 and majority leader in 1971 and lost both.

At any rate, Gephardt, a moderate, is currently veering left as well—on the MX, for instance. Just a few months ago, Gephardt was pining to cosponsor a bipartisan tax reform bill with President Reagan. Now he is standoffish. Instead of focusing on the large areas where his plan and the administration's agree, Gephardt is concentrating his public statements on parts of Reagan's plan he doesn't like. It's becoming a "Christmas tree" decorated with tax breaks, he says, correctly.

Heightened partisan feelings recently kept House Republicans from approving money for refugees in Central America under the guise of aiding the *contras*. The rebels wouldn't be aided at all by the bill, sponsored by liberal Democrats Michael Barnes and Lee Hamilton. The bill initially passed the House in April, just prior to "no" votes on both military and "nonlethal" aid for the *contras*. That left Republicans with a choice: they could leave the refugee measure intact, creating the false impression they'd done something for the *contras*, or they could rescind their approval and come back later in search of military aid. They voted to rescind and return.

DEMOCRATS argue that the Republicans have been playing dirty by targeting their leaders for defeat (O'Neill and Wright, for starters), and they claim Gingrich has Rasputin-like sway over his Republican colleagues. Republicans cite the McCloskey case as evidence of Democratic arrogance. They note that the Democrats targeted Michel in 1982 and he nearly lost. Republicans speak ominously of the day that a Wright-Coelho axis takes over, fearing the new leaders would make O'Neill seem like a kindly uncle by comparison. Coelho is running for majority whip. He has four opponents, but should win handily. Tom Foley, who is unopposed for majority leader, figures in the leadership equation. He is no one's idea of a zealot.

But the new partisanship has its limits. Listen to what happened when Vin Weber and his allies tried to stage a Republican boycott of a Public Works subcommittee hearing in Fort Worth, Texas, just after the vote seating McCloskey. Fort Worth is Jim Wright's hometown, and he was to appear at the hearing on everyone's favorite pork barrel legislation, "infrastructure" funding. Weber wanted the Republican caucus officially to instruct Republicans to stay away from the hearing, but Cheney talked him out of it. Weber did urge a voluntary boycott, though, and freshman Representative Joe Barton, whose district is adjacent to Wright's, planned to lead a band of anti-McCloskey picketers outside the hearing when it ended at 2:30 p.m. A good way to catch reporters' attention, he thought. Well, nearly all the Republicans on the subcommittee attended the hearing. They told the Democrats about Barton's planned demonstration, and representatives of both parties contrived to end the hearing an hour early. When Barton appeared, there was scarcely a reporter in sight, much less a hearing. Pork barrel still takes priority over partisanship.

FRED BARNES

POSTCARD KANSAS

HOMAGE TO JELLO

FOR TOO LONG westbound travelers have dismissed my home state as nothing more than a 400-mile drag strip they must cross to reach Colorado. Decades of snide comments—"Where is everything?" "Kansas: Gateway to Nebraska"—have saddled the Jayhawker State with a crippling self-doubt about its worth as a vacation spot. It is true that Kansas's poor tourism image stems partly from the Wheat State's chronic shortage of lakes, rivers, hills, trees, and cities. But more of the blame lies with the Kansas Travel and Tourism Department, which has failed to market Kansas's strong points effectively. Sure, it may be lean on the things most people like to do, but the Sunflower State is arguably the nation's richest in terms of the arcane but important, pitiful-yet-lovable tourist attractions exemplified by "World's Largest" attractions.

There are, for example, "the unique concrete masterpieces" at The Garden of Eden near Lucas, which are worth a day of anyone's vacation. It is here that a Civil War veteran named Samuel Dinsmoor sculpted—alongside scenes from Genesis—a concrete allegory of the dog-eat-dog philosophy that he believed had overtaken America during the war years. Central to the scene is "The Trust"—a concrete octopus. It has one tentacle around a camp-following slattern and one in the food sack of a Union soldier. The soldier points a rifle at an Indian, who has his bow drawn on a dog that is trying to climb a concrete tree to reach a cat. The cat is attacking a bird. The

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bird, in turn, is eating a worm, and the worm a leaf.

Few Kansas attractions are on this level, true. But the bulk of them are quite good, and (a bonus) a number of them are the World's Largest of their kind. Among them:

The World's Largest Cement Prairie Dog, near Russell. Also the home of Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole.

The World's Largest Barbed Wire Museum, in Lacrosse.

The Vieux Elm—The World's Largest American Elm, near St. Marys. Named after a certain Mr. Vieux, a French trader.

The World's Largest Ball of Hay-Baling Twine, in Cawker City. Formerly the World's Largest Ball of Twine—Period. It was supplanted several years ago by a larger *multicolored* ball put together by an aggressive Midwestern town angling for an instant rep. (The town is either in Minnesota or North Dakota, but as a true Kansas chauvinist I can't even pretend to care which.)

The World's Largest Hand-Dug Well, in Greensburg. It's 109 feet deep, 32 feet in diameter. "An engineering marvel when dug in 1887." Also the home of the World's Largest Pallisite Meteorite.

Big Pool—the World's Largest Free Outdoor Concrete Municipal Swimming Pool, in Garden City. "A bathtub to three generations." Garden City also boasts what is allegedly the World's Largest Beef-Packing Plant and the Big Slab—the World's Largest Variable-Usage Asphalt Surface.

The World's Largest (Only) Exact Replica of the Liberty Bell Weaved with Turkey Red Wheat Straw, in Goessel. "By 200 local Mennonite 'weavers' ranging from 10 to 80 years—over 2,000 man hours consumed."

The World's Largest Museum Display of Jello Memorabilia, in Lakin.

The World's Largest Grain Elevator, in Hutchinson. "Over 1/2-mile long." It is rumored that there is now a larger one in Saudi Arabia, but that's not something outsiders should ask about.

And one reportedly on the boards in Wichita—Kansas's most cosmopolitan city—the World's Largest Port Wine Cheese Ball (without Pecan Studding).

These attractions did not just happen, of course, nor would it be fair to write them off as these towns' pathetic attempts at cashing in. As amateur Kansas historian David Hann of Lawrence explains, they are the logical flowering of the state's very Kansasness. "These things were meant not so much to get attention as to simply verify people's existence. Remember, there was a time when there was hardly anything *standing* out there."

IN *The Mind of the South* W. J. Cash wrote about a type of Southerner who was at once deeply puritanical and instinctively carnal. The Kansas equivalent to this troubling and paradoxical mental state is brought about by our World's Largest attractions. You love and respect these places, certainly, and you will defend them savagely against the taunts of outsiders. Yet at the same time, when you visit one of them you must always razz the person selling tickets and souvenirs.

Thus on a recent mini-tour of several World's Largests, I found myself at the Big Well annoying the kindly, middle-aged woman who has to sit there all day selling one dollar tickets to the Big Well descending staircase. "Hey, are you sure this is the world's *largest* hand-dug well?"

She looked at me as if she were staring into a cold, 40-mile-an-hour Western Kansas wind. "Yes. It is."

Leaning over the counter, leering, trying for the cutting, suspicious tone of Hazel Motes in *Wise Blood*, I said, "Well I heard they dug up a bigger one over in the United Arab Emirates." As she walked away to a storage room in back, she hissed, "Well, I wouldn't know about that."

Four days later in Garden City I still felt guilty about this behavior, all the more so because I planned to do exactly the same thing later that afternoon. Before I left Washington, a woman from Utah had told me about a fabulous World's Largest that none of my Kansas friends had ever seen or heard of: the World's Largest Mortared Cowboy-Boot Fence, near Lydia.

On some very detailed maps, midway on the desolate 40-mile stretch between Lakin and Leoti on Highway 25 in Western Kansas, you will see a town called Lydia. I don't remember now if the woman had been there or only knew someone who had, but she said there was a farmer south of town who had constructed a "boot fence" by mortaring old cowboy boots together. I didn't care how large it was—by default it would be the World's Largest.

As I drove north and west past mile after mile of flat brown farm land, I imagined our dialogue. Me: "Well, the word I hear is that they built an even *larger* mortared cowboy-boot fence over in Jordan." Farmer: (*a comic outburst*). Only one problem—there was no Lydia, just three farms that were slightly closer together than the rest.

For those of you who don't know how a typical Western Kansan on an isolated farm would react to a tall thin stranger in a Volkswagen Rabbit with D.C. plates knocking on his door to ask about a cowboy-boot fence . . . well, it's simply impossible to describe how fruitless and stupid the whole thing was. A mean-looking old guy wearing a farm-implement cap answered the door.

"Hi—'Howdy'—Ah, I'm looking for a town called Lydia? Is that around here?"

He gave me the "cold wind" look. "That's where you're at right now. And I'm *tryin'* to eat my dinner."

"Great. The reason . . . I heard that there was a 'boot fence' around here—"

"A *what*?"

"That a farmer had mortared together some old boots and made a really cool boot fence—" Slammo.

I grew sad. For the first time it occurred to me that the mortared boot fence might only be a rumor. Half an hour later a young woman at the county agricultural office in Leoti confirmed that it was. And she earned my permanent respect by not laughing—not even smiling—when I asked her if she had heard of it. She immediately asked everybody in the office about it and called four local farms for possible leads. They all did what they could. It was Kansas at its best—hard-core helpfulness.

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"Hey," she asked when she noticed my D.C. license plate, "are you one of those reporters who goes around to things like that?"

"No. I just wanted to see the Mortared Boot Fence. I've traveled hundreds of miles out of my way. Deep down I still believe it's out there."

"Oh . . . well, nobody's here heard of it. What we think your friend was talking about is there's a farmer up in Russell Springs who sticks boots on fenceposts. But he doesn't mortar them."

"On *posts*? . . . Why would anybody want to see that?"

ALEX HEARD

Alex Heard is a writer from the Kansas-Washington corridor.

A tale of two Mitterrands.

LE GERRYMANDER

PRESIDENT François Mitterrand likes to be known as a cultivated statesman who will leave his mark on French society. In this persona—Mitterrand the Intellectual, we might call it—he has invested political capital in a new, "popular" opera house on the Place de la Bastille, and in I.M. Pei's controversial renovation of the Louvre. He took office in 1981 with a visionary and humane program to refashion the French nation. But there is another Mitterrand, with a radically different demeanor. This Mitterrand is a left-wing politico who eagerly dives into the muck to out-slog his political opponents. He created the present Socialist Party in the early 1970s by stabbing and outflanking his competitors, and twice entered into alliance with the Communists for the express purpose of stealing their electorate. As president, he has twice proposed major laws whose only real effect would have been to damage political opponents (one was aimed at conservative Paris mayor Jacques Chirac, another at press lord Robert Hersant).

With the collapse of the Socialists' program in 1982 and 1983, Mitterrand the Intellectual has been eclipsed. Mitterrand the Politico, on the other hand, has just introduced his most cynical and desperate project yet: proportional representation in the National Assembly. As in the Chirac and Hersant affairs, it is a clear case of the president trying to change the rules of the political game to his political advantage. But this time, the change puts the constitutional structure of the Fifth Republic at risk.

The French Assembly is elected under a constituency system similar to that of the U.S. House of Representatives or the British Parliament, with the added proviso that a runoff is required if no candidate gets a majority in the first round. Given the government's unpopularity, the system is virtually certain to return a large conservative majority in the legislative elections of 1986. But Mitterrand does not come up for reelection until 1988, and thus faces the unpleasant probability of having to deal with a hostile Assembly for the last two years of his term. Since the Assembly must confirm the prime minister and the cabinet, Mitterrand might find himself completely alone in the government.

No other president of the Fifth Republic has had to face this dilemma, and Mitterrand does not intend to be the first. He has introduced a law to replace the electoral system with one of his own devising, based on the idea of proportional representation. In 1986 voters in each of France's 95 departments will choose between parties, not individual candidates, and the parties will be allocated a number of deputies corresponding to the size of their vote and the department's population. A department of a million people, for example, will have ten deputies, and a party winning 40 percent of the vote there will get four of them. Since France currently has four major political groupings (and even more parties), the new system virtually ensures that no single movement will obtain a clear majority in the Assembly in the near future. It is also likely to bring the racist National Front into the Assembly for the first time.

Mitterrand's new law abounds in irony. As André Fontaine of *Le Monde* has pointed out, no Assembly chosen by proportional representation could ever unite to approve anything as radical as proportional representation. And though Mitterrand insists that the present system discriminates against minority parties, he has maintained for 14 years that France doesn't need minority parties, but rather a strong majority on the left. The legislative elections of 1981 gave him that majority, and thus made him the prime beneficiary of the system he now wants to change.

IN DEFENSE of his plan, Mitterrand recalls that proportional representation was included in the Socialists' 1981 platform. True enough. Yet he did nothing to act on the idea when the Socialists were in ascendancy in 1981-82, and has made little pretense about why he is acting now. Mitterrand also points out that the electoral system is not a part of the constitution, but a law, subject to change by the Assembly. True again. However, the present system has functioned as an integral part of French government throughout the history of the Fifth Republic.

If Mitterrand cared to offer a final rationalization of the electoral reform, he could point out that the constitution of the Fifth Republic was tailored to suit a single politician, Charles de Gaulle. Indeed, in the early 1960s Mitterrand condemned the constitution for precisely this reason. So why shouldn't he now alter an electoral law to suit another politician—himself? It is an important question, one that implicitly refers to the volatile history of republicanism in France. When does a regime become legitimate? At what point do the rules of the game cease to be an instrument of party politics and become an expression of the national will? The answer is again ironic. The Fifth Republic be-

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came completely legitimate when it allowed the Socialist François Mitterrand to become its president with a large parliamentary majority, and when he began to use its institutions for his own purposes.

If the Assembly, as expected, passes proportional representation into law, the Fifth Republic will suffer a double blow. It will become less governable, condemning its presidents to spend their time constructing shaky coalitions instead of getting on with their programs; and it will become less legitimate, with all of France's highly polarized political movements again treating essential institutions of the Republic as partisan playthings. Several influential figures on the left have condemned Mitterrand for exactly these reasons, and one Socialist rival, Agriculture Minister Michel Rocard, has used the event to stage a dramatic resignation. He realizes, as Mitterrand does not, that this misguided attempt at electoral reform is likely to overshadow all the president's other achievements.

DAVID A. BELL

Aid to dependent German carmakers.

THE MERCEDES RELIEF ACT

WHEN Michael Deaver returned from an official trip to Germany in February with a new BMW, he was roundly denounced for obtaining a substantial discount with his diplomatic passport. However, Deaver's real gain came from a source that thousands of less well-known foreign car buyers have discovered as well: the "gray market." By avoiding official dealers and buying the car in Europe yourself, as Deaver did, you can put the strong dollar to good use and pay up to 45 percent less that you would in America. You can save 20 percent if you buy here through independents who have purchased cars abroad in the local currency. And you don't even need a diplomatic passport.

Deaver may have gotten in on a good deal just in time. If the Senate has its way, it will shut down the gray market. The Commerce Committee recently approved a bill that would prohibit individuals and independent dealers from bringing foreign cars to the United States. Protectionist legislation for American business is bad enough; now Congress seems intent on helping foreign car dealers and manufacturers avoid the trauma of competition.

The bill's sponsors—Daniel Inouye and Wendell Ford—say they are only trying to protect American consumers from the dangers of unauthorized foreign imports, which they claim do not comply with U.S. safety and pollution standards. But their legislation seems designed mostly to assure foreign manufacturers and American foreign car dealers higher profits. It comes at a time when the manufacturers and dealers are losing out to the gray market. Because of the dollar's rise, gray market imports have increased dramatically: sales went from 5,000 cars in 1982 to 48,000 last year. Projections based on the first four months of 1985 indicate that sales will reach 60,000 this year. "There really isn't much rationale for this bill other than helping out foreign carmakers," says one Senate aide. "I guess you could call it 'The Mercedes Relief Act.' "

MERCEDES HAS BEEN particularly hard hit by the proliferation of gray market sales. The German luxury carmaker sold 79,000 automobiles through its authorized dealers in this country last year, but Americans purchased another 22,000 Mercedes through the gray market. The loss of such a large part of its American sales to the gray market means tremendous unrealized profits for Mercedes. Over the last decade, Mercedes and other expensive European cars like the BMW have become de rigueur for the upwardly mobile; manufacturers have taken advantage of the fashion by shipping fewer cars to their American franchises than can be sold, and actually increasing the prices (after inflation) of cars sold in the United States instead of lowering them to reflect the value of the dollar. Mercedes is especially renowned for such pricing policies. In 1970 a Mercedes diesel sedan cost about $5,600 in this country. A 1985 version of that car now sells for about $32,000 here, but only about $15,000 in Europe, an increase consistent with inflation.

With the gray market soaking up more and more profits, the European manufacturers told their congressional lobbyists to get busy. The National Automobile Dealers Association, which represents European car franchises in the United States, was happy to testify. And American manufacturers gave their tacit support to the anti-gray market effort; after all, if a $50,000 Mercedes was tough competition for Detroit, a $25,000 Mercedes would be worse. The strategy was simple: make a fuss about safety and pollution hazards. "The existing 'gray market' in automobiles," Mercedes told Congress, " has become a gaping loophole in the Motor Vehicle Safety Act which endangers consumers [and] threatens the environment."

And yet there is no evidence that gray market cars have caused accidents or proven to be unsafe. In fact, there are already myriad regulations to assure compliance with American standards. The buyer must show the Department of Transportation that an imported vehicle has been properly modified. This usually involves testing the car with pollution measuring devices, installing catalytic converters, new headlights, bumper and side-door reinforcements, and so forth. Until these changes are made, the importer cannot drive or sell the car, nor can he recover an "import bond fee" (roughly equal to the car's purchase price) that must be posted with customs. The average processing time is six months.

Moreover, many of the cars being imported already meet most U.S. standards. Ten years ago, car buffs went to Europe to buy models unavailable here. Today, because of the significant price difference, they travel abroad to

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purchase models that are essentially the same as those sold through American dealers. This is increasingly true as European manufacturers begin to standardize their cars. Mercedes, for example, has begun to offer a catalytic converter as a factory option in Germany, and will probably make the part standard within three years. European makers are also building emissions control systems in line with U.S. requirements on their domestic models because the European Economic Community is pushing a shift to lead-free gasoline.

Mercedes and the legislators behind the "relief act" claim that despite the compliance controls and the move toward greater standardization, many importers still get away with noncompliance or do shoddy engineering jobs. These complaints may have some validity, but they're hardly cause for banning non-authorized imports. Compliance rules simply need to be better and more efficiently enforced. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration already devotes 25 percent of its budget to compliance reviews, and still imposes a six-month waiting period on foreign car buyers for their inspections. The gray marketeers themselves have proposed a relatively small fee on those who purchase cars from them—about $500—that would go to NHTSA. This way, they say, compliance reviews could be both expedited and made more stringent. NHTSA could also license independent dealers who modify foreign cars, thus assuring quality work.

Because authorized dealers must maintain inventories, pay a staff, and service warranties, their prices will always be higher than those available on the gray market. But these additional costs do not begin to justify the tremendous price differentials that exist between cars sold by dealers and cars sold on the gray market. Individual and independent importers are simply playing the free market in finding the lowest price. Of course, it is difficult to get worked up on behalf of anyone who can afford a $20,000 car. But Mercedes, BMW, et al., have really taken some members of Congress for a ride.

ANTONY J. BLINKEN

Norma Rae goes to Hollywood.

A UNION FOR YUPPIES

I'M GETTING PAID a five-figure sum for this article. That's counting the two figures to the right of the decimal point. It took me a week to produce. If my editors don't like parts of it, I will rewrite them, no extra charge. If they don't publish it, I will receive only a small "kill fee." For me, this is a good deal. I am a fool.

I should be a member of the Writers Guild of America, writing movie and TV screenplays. If I wrote the "story"—not the dialogue, just the story—for an episode of "Miami Vice" (also about a week's work, I'm told), I would be guaranteed a minimum payment of $6,056 under the contract recently negotiated between the Guild and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers. That's money I get whether they like the story or not. If they like it, and they assign me to write the full dialogue (teleplay), I get another $9,985. Guaranteed. The additional work may take as long as three weeks or as little as a few days, depending on how fast I am. Then, if they want me to change so much as a word, I bill them for a "polish," at $1,992. If they want "significant changes in plot, story line, or interrelationship of characters," that's a "rewrite," which will run them $3,983.

My work is then finished, but the fun is only beginning. If the network produces my show, they get to air it once for free. If they use it as a summer rerun, however, I am entitled to Article 15B Re-run compensation (more commonly known as "residuals") of an additional $10,624. So far (assuming one "polish") I've earned $28,657 for a month's work. But I'm lucky. "Miami Vice" is a hit show, and after the network is through with it, it will probably go into "syndication"—which means it will be sold to local TV stations for further rerunning. At this point I can begin to think about retirement, because every time my show is shown, even while I'm asleep at two in the morning, I will get a check: $3,187 for the first time, $2,656 for the second time, declining on down to $531 per show for the 12th and succeeding showings.

There are other minor jackpots I can hit. I get "character payments" if I have invented a character who becomes a regular on the series ($215 for each show the character appears in). I also get "sequel payments" of $1,441 per show if my ideas are the basis for a sequel script or, better yet, a "spin-off" series ("Cleveland Vice"?).

All these payments are union *minimums*. I would get them because I'm a nobody. Were I a somebody, I'd be free as a WGA member to cut a better deal.

It is, as they say, no accident that Hollywood writers have been a relative hotbed of left and liberal support for labor, from the 1930s (when the Young Communists used to meet over at the Hillcrest Country Club) to the present. Unionism certainly seems to have worked for the writers themselves. Even Ben Stein, a Hollywood Reaganite who wrote a whole book trying to explain the subtle liberal bias of his fellow screenwriters, inadvertently explained it better in an Op-Ed piece defending his union after it briefly went on strike this March. "The Writers Guild is salvation," Stein wrote, ". . . writers united to protect themselves from a rapacious world."

THAT SELF-IMAGE is surely one of the most vivid triumphs of the modern literary imagination. When the Guild was first formed, in the middle of the Depression, one of its first acts was to petition President Roosevelt to lift a proposed NRA code provision that would have capped salaries at $100,000 a year. "But that's

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more than I make," FDR protested before relenting. According to *The Hollywood Writers' Wars* by Nancy Lynn Schwartz, early organizing efforts were hampered when "the bulk of guild membership settled down to serious polo, yachting and golf." In 1935 Clifford Odets, author of *Waiting for Lefty*, moved to Hollywood. Moss Hart told him that he had persuaded many other writers to become leftists and emulate him. "You mean my plays convert them?" Odets reportedly asked. "No, your salary," responded Hart.

Guilt from making so much money—and at sacrificing artistic integrity to make it—was, of course, one of the emotional underpinnings of the Guild. In 1936 Dorothy Parker put it candidly, defending the union against arguments by some screenwriters who feared disturbing their "soft racket." Parker argued that "what makes it hard in screen writing . . . is the money you get. You see, it brings out that uncomfortable little thing called conscience. You aren't writing for the love of it or the art of it or whatever; you are doing a chore assigned to you by your employer. . . . You've got yourself to face, and you have to live with yourself."

It was an odd argument: I've sold out to get rich, so I have to go on strike to regain my integrity. The Guild, in a sense, allowed writers to be rich and oppressed instead of rich and ashamed. Add a touch of snobbery, and the writer's wounded pride at being so low on the Hollywood totem pole, and you had fertile ground for labor solidarity. These days WGA members ask if you've heard the one about the Polish actress. (Trying to get a part in a movie, she slept with the writer.)

IN KEEPING with the times, however, today's screenwriters seem less tortured and more forthrightly mercenary. This spring's strike was a case in point. The old atmospherics were there, certainly. Someone played old labor songs on the harmonica while the writers briefly paced in front of CBS's Television City. And there was Waldo Salt, a member of the original Hollywood Nineteen (and author of *Midnight Cowboy* and *Coming Home*), urging solidarity against the producers, while one union leader, Lila Garrett (*The Other Woman*), equated the writers' cause with the plight of the "million homeless in New York."

But the real issue was videocassette royalties—specifically whether the studios would base the writer's minimum cut on producer's gross or on distributor's gross (five times as much). The Guild was split. A dissident faction, the Union Blues, led by screenwriter Lionel Chetwynd (*Escape from Iran*), opposed the strike on the economic grounds that it would cost more in lost earnings than it would gain. The militants scorned Chetwynd as a "management fink" and his supporters as weak-willed "Yuppies." "Don't you realize," said one militant during a tumultuous strike meeting, "that we are the cutting edge of the working class?" In the end, 72 percent of the writers voted to accept management's offer, with younger writers largely against the strike.

Actually, if you can believe the AFL-CIO, the WGA writers, even Chetwynd's followers, *are* the cutting edge of the working class. Last February, in a well-publicized report that frankly acknowledged the moribund state of American labor, the AFL-CIO called for "new approaches to represent workers," including one in which unions would not "establish a comprehensive set of hard and fast terms and conditions of employment," but rather "negotiate minimum guarantees that will serve as a floor for individual bargaining." That is what Hollywood unions like the WGA do, which is what gave the AFL-CIO's strategists the idea. They would extend the WGA approach to unorganized professionals like doctors, engineers, and salesmen, who tend to worry that unions inevitably mean a sort of lowest common denominator inflexibility. Yuppie unionism, in short. In this vision, the founders of the Writers Guild were not preposterous pseudo-proles at all, but proud professionals who recognized that even people who could afford to eat out every night might legitimately gain more money, status, and authority through collective action. Was Lillian Hellman the first Yuppie?

The WGA's example, in some respects, makes this "upmarket" organizing strategy quite appealing. The Guild seems immune to most of the familiar complaints about unions. Do unions resist merit pay? Since the WGA scale is only a floor for individual bargaining, screenwriters are amply rewarded for performance. The residual system is in effect a profit-sharing scheme that ties income to a venture's success. Do unions prevent incompetents from being fired? WGA members can be, and routinely are, dismissed by producers for reasons both good and bad, without union hassles. Do many unions explicitly protect their own members by discouraging newcomers? For whatever reason—romantic ideology or fear of "licensing" writers—the WGA remains open to anyone off the bus from Kansas who can sell an idea.

Other Guild actions seem to enhance both the bargaining power of its members and the operation of the marketplace at the same time. Because their union itself provides them with an excellent health plan, for example, Hollywood writers may move from employer to employer without worrying about losing medical coverage. Since they are not trapped at any one firm, they have greater individual bargaining power. The union also arbitrates screen credits with swiftness (and acceptance) no court could match. Otherwise, writers will tell you, every script in town would have the producer's spouse listed as an author.

SO WHAT, if anything, is wrong with Yuppie unionism as practiced by the Guild? The first problem, I think, can be glimpsed reading through the WGA contract. In Article 20B, part 3, for example, there is the "two-meeting rule." Easterners snicker when Hollywood executives say they have to "take a meeting," but thanks to this rule a "meeting" (also called a "pitch session") has an unusual formal significance: "If in the first interview the writer

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gives a story, then a second meeting at the Company's request" is a commitment to buy the story. Telephone calls count as "meetings." Equally eye-catching contract provisions apply only to people "of the same industry stature and [with] responsibilities and functions similar to those held or exercised by the following executive producers during 1977: Samuel Arkoff, Ron Miller and Marvin Mirisch."

This sort of language is an attempt to formalize the unformalizable, to write neat rules that cabin the hurly-burly of the entrepreneurial world, where meetings are sloppy and even Arkoff, Miller, and Mirisch probably each have slightly different stature. These attempts are often futile (producers are said to routinely circumvent the two-meeting rule). When they aren't futile, they are often just as inefficient as any work rule devised by the United Auto Workers. What if a producer thinks of an important question he forgot to ask at the first meeting? Rather than pay $6,000, he may choose to forgo a promising story. Why must a writer be paid for a full "polish" just to change one line in a screenplay for which he has already been amply compensated? True, the WGA's work rules do not reach the absurdities achieved by Hollywood's technical unions—like the broadcast engineers, who insist that network programming executives are forbidden from pushing "record" buttons on company VCRs, even in their own homes.

Finally, the Hollywood-style unions do not ultimately offer an answer to the basic economic (and moral) dilemma that faces all labor organizations—namely that the more management pays each worker, the fewer workers management can afford to hire, so that higher wages quickly translate into higher unemployment. The Dramatists Guild in New York recently suspended the authors of the Broadway show *Grind*, including Hal Prince, for accepting a "substandard" contract. But Prince and his colleagues did it because otherwise they couldn't afford to get their show to Broadway—which, you've probably heard, hasn't seen many new musicals lately.

One wealthy WGA member assured me that it couldn't happen to screenwriters: "There is no evidence that employment of writers goes down with increases in price." This writer may entertain such an economic illusion because he, like most WGA members, writes primarily for television, a regulated monopoly with a highly sheltered life-style. If steelworkers raise their wages, steel companies will tend to hire fewer workers and produce less steel. In contrast, the production of network TV shows is arbitrarily fixed by the Federal Communications Commission at three hours of prime time entertainment a night—so the networks will keep on buying roughly the same number of scripts per year, even if the writers' price goes up. This is just another respect in which Hollywood is not quite the real world, and Hollywood writers are not quite a model for real world unionism.

MICKEY KAUS

How to protect your kids from Shakespeare.

BOWDLERIZING THE BARD

IT WAS a studious ninth grader, not an anti-censorship brigade, who set off the most recent flurry about what kids ought to be reading in school. The culprits were not fervid fundamentalists but staid corporate publishers. And the object of censorship was not a science or history text or an obscene novel, but the work of the most revered playwright in the world.

Daniel Blum, a student at Madison High School in Vienna, Virginia, had seen a Folger Theatre production of *Romeo and Juliet*, and when he sat down with his Scott, Foresman *America Reads* textbook to write a paper about Mercutio's Queen Mab speech, he noticed that some of the lines were missing. For example, the "fairies' midwife" who "gallops night by night / Through lovers' brains" is no longer characterized as the hag who "when maids lie on their backs, / . . . presses them and learns them first to bear, / Making them women of good carriage."

Around the time the story broke in Virginia, a parent in Minneapolis discovered that the same anthology had been altered as well as abridged. Romeo's line in Act V, "Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight," was changed to read, "Well, Juliet, I will *be* with thee tonight." Investigations by a Fairfax County textbook advisory committee, school boards, columnists, and People For The American Way revealed not only that more than 300 lines had been eliminated from Scott, Foresman's *Romeo and Juliet*—most of them sexual allusions—but that high school textbook publishers routinely expurgate Shakespeare. Some, including Scott, Foresman, note in teachers' editions that "abridgments" have been made. Most do not.

The overwhelming reaction was one of astonished indignation. Scott, Foresman has received over 2,000 letters deploring the practice of "self-censorship." Yet there is nothing new or surprising about the bowdlerization of Shakespeare. On the contrary, the current batch of "censored" textbooks is resolutely faithful to the traditions of Dr. Bowdler and his sister Harriet, who published their first edition of *Family Shakespeare* in 1807. And publishers of literature anthologies for the public schools have always felt constrained to abridge and excerpt—keeping in mind both the sophistication of the students who will be reading them and the requirements of parents and school districts that will be buying them.

Marlene Blum, a member of the Fairfax County textbook advisory committee and the mother of Daniel, complained to Sandra Sugawara of *The Washington Post*, "It's as if [the publishers] have become the arbiter of what children are to read and not read." Yet if anything, textbook publishers have become more fearful over the years about making their own determinations of what children are to

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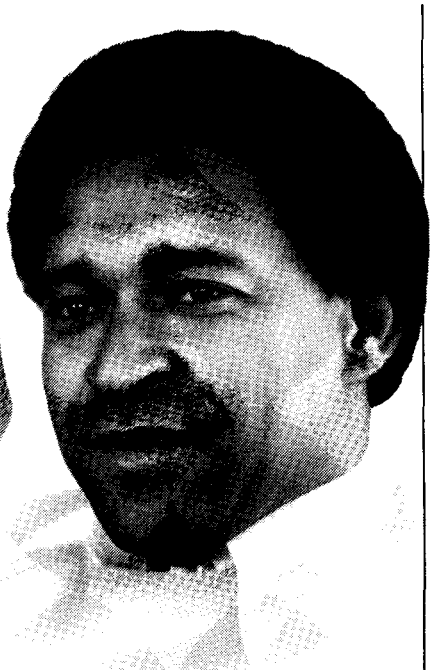

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read and not read. They have found that they cannot afford to dismiss the bedrock fundamentalism of people like Mel and Norma Gabler, Texas's notorious textbook scourges, any more than they can the clamoring of countless other political, religious, and ethnic groups to cleanse their books of sexual and racial stereotyping. Jane Bachman, an editorial vice president at Scott, Foresman, guardedly told me, "Textbook publishers anticipate what may be a troublesome matter. We might be a little paranoid when we put a book together."

Clearly some things have changed since the heyday of bowdlerism. There is no comfortable consensus, as there was in the Victorian era, about matters of propriety, church, and state. In its absence, the public schools have become a stage for various special interest groups to perform their political dramas. As the requirements for textbooks have multiplied, publishers have honed their marketing skills, and the role of the editor has dwindled. No single sentinel trims the text and upholds moral and literary standards. Indeed, it is almost irrelevant what the editor believes. Before a textbook comes into being, surveys are conducted, focus groups are convened, and outside consultants are hired. As the book is prepared, armies of reading specialists, instructional designers, teachers, and computers zealously watch over it. They guard against unattractive book covers and ethnic slurs; they monitor "curricular congruence" (text, workbook, and teachers' guide must complement each other) and "readability" levels (vocabulary words and number of syllables per sentence are tabulated according to grade). When the book is finally published, it is subject to review and complaint by concerned citizens and put up for "adoption" by state and local textbook advisory committees equipped with complicated checklists of requirements.

DRAWING BY BEN SARGENT FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

In this Byzantine method of patching together textbooks, the integrity of any single story or play—not to mention the needs of students—often gets lost. Certain particularly troublesome items have been virtually abandoned—among them Shirley Jackson's famous short story, "The Lottery" (too violent), and *The Merchant of Venice* (anti-Semitic). Publishers have gone to absurd lengths to accommodate disparate interest groups and varying state guidelines. Elsa Walsh reported in *The Washington Post* that in a chapter from *Tom Sawyer*, which appears in Ginn and Company's sixth-grade reader *Flights of Color*, the colloquialisms have vanished, the grammar has been cleaned up, Tom's oath of "honest Injun" has been removed, and most references to boys or men have been changed to children or people. A story called "A Perfect Day for Ice Cream" was included in Scott, Foresman's 1985 eighth-grade anthology only after the words "ice cream" had been deleted from the title and a scene about a trip to the ice-cream parlor had been eliminated. The reason, apparently, was California's "social content guidelines" for textbooks, which warn against references to junk food. McGraw Hill's seventh-grade *Focus* anthology has expunged from "Rip Van Winkle" not only difficult vocabulary words here and there such as "dismembered," but the reference to "obsequious and conciliatory" men who go home to "shrews" and "termagant" wives.

And yet, this is an old story. As Jane Bachman of Scott, Foresman aptly, if perhaps inadvertently, punned in a letter to a man who had written to express dismay at the censoring of the Bard, "Stage and film directors have had their way with Shakespeare since his plays were first performed." One of those they have taken particular liberties with is *Romeo and Juliet*. In *Dr. Bowdler's Legacy* Noel Perrin describes David Garrick in 1750 preparing an acting version of the play in which he decided to dampen Juliet's ardent soliloquy in Act II. "He wasn't trying to spare the audience, though; he just thought it out of character for such a nice girl to speak of maidenheads, much less to wish openly that Romeo would hurry up and take hers." In the 1818 edition

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of *Family Shakespeare*, Dr. Bowdler removed almost exactly the same lines. Today's textbook publishers too have banished the stuff about maidenheads, both in the banter between Capulet's servants Samson and Gregory in Act I and in Juliet's soliloquy. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; Scott, Foresman; Macmillan; Ginn; McDougal, Littell and Company; and McGraw Hill have all eliminated the lines:

> Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
> By their own beauties, or, if love be blind,
> It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
> Thou sober-suited matron all in black
> And learn me how to lose a winning match,
> Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.
> Hood my unmann'd blood, bating in my cheeks,
> With thy black mantle, till strange love grow bold,
> Think true love acted simple modesty . . .

as well as,

> O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
> But not possess'd it, and though I am sold,
> Not yet enjoy'd. . . .

Bowdlerizers have long recognized that *Romeo and Juliet*, with its arousing themes of young love, sex, drugs, and death, is particularly appealing to adolescents, and thus a perfect candidate for the curriculum—and for excisions. In editions for the tender reader, it isn't just the impassioned words of a young girl that are generally deemed unprintable, but references to the body (notably nipples and genitals) and its natural functions (particularly childbearing and sexual desire or activity).

One of the salacious lines that has been consistently singled out over the years is Mercutio's remark in Act II, in which he teasingly replies to the Nurse's question about the time: " 'Tis no less, I tell you, for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon." The first great American expurgation of Shakespeare, published in 1872 by Ginn ("selected and prepared for use in Schools, Clubs, Classes, and Families"), scrupulously retained the word "prick," but omitted "bawdy." Perrin surmises that the book's editor—a Shakespearean scholar—hoped that without the clue his readers wouldn't catch the double entendre. A century later no major textbook publisher is so daring. All have removed the entire line from their ninth-grade anthologies.

Macbeth and *Hamlet* have fared somewhat better. Among the 12th-grade anthologies that include *Macbeth* as their Shakespeare selection, five of the big publishers, like a number of their 19th-century predecessors, have left the play virtually intact—except for the Porter's second speech, where he expounds upon drunken lechery, which "provokes the desire," but "takes away the performance." Scott, Foresman restored the speech in 1979, but continues to do some damage (100 lines' worth) to *Hamlet*. The scene in Act III where he viciously berates his mother for wallowing in incest has been robbed of some of the lines that would doubtless most appeal to teenagers, including: "Nay, but to live / In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed, / Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love / Over the nasty sty!"

As Perrin points out, the Victorians bowdlerized openly, secure in the belief that they were serving the cause of Christianity and assisting in society's moral progress. Today's textbook editors, by contrast, do it shamefully, defensively, on behalf of a cause that most of them don't fully believe in. Responding to the initial complaints about Scott, Foresman's fiddling with Shakespeare, Richard T. Morgan, the president, emphatically stated that "no language has been changed." That proved to be incorrect. It also skirts the tougher question about the line between abridgment and selective expurgation, and about the publisher's responsibility to state clearly what kinds of changes have been made. Jane Bachman insisted, "In no way has the basic nature of 'Romeo and Juliet' been altered." Ginn, which eliminated about 400 lines from *Romeo and Juliet* in its ninth-grade anthology, *Understanding Literature*, brazenly states in its teachers' edition, " 'The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet' is presented here as Shakespeare wrote it."

Edmund Farrell, a professor of English education at the University of Texas at Austin who has been an author and outside editor for Scott, Foresman since 1958, says frankly: "We are putting out books for ninth graders, not for college students. Schools act in loco parentis. There is no way I know of that a publisher can print 'the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.' The choice is between abridging the play or not including it at all." That may be understandable. What is not understandable, or acceptable, regardless of the book's market, is to purge and then insist that the basic nature of the play is unchanged. If certain passages must be trimmed, why not indicate with ellipses, as Scott, Foresman does in its 12th-grade *Hamlet*? Why not also point out in both the teachers' guide and the students' introduction that the play has been expurgated?

Textbook publishers and school boards have become so accustomed to covert bowdlerization that they apparently came to forget that it was even going on. The Virginia state board of education, for one, had been happily buying the disputed Scott, Foresman textbook series for years until a ninth grader and his mother objected to its cavalier treatment of Shakespeare. As for teachers, the good ones have always had more faith in their own judgment about what is suitable for their students than they have in the prepackaged selections of mass-market textbook publishers. Some have even taken advantage of their books' flaws. After Daniel Blum's discovery, his teacher supplied the students with the full text of *Romeo and Juliet*, and discussed the anthology's cuts in class. Covert or open, censorship is a doomed enterprise, for it stimulates precisely that dangerous urge it set out to crush: curiosity.

DOROTHY WICKENDEN

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How one of Washington's slickest operators keeps the Navy abloat.

FOOL OF SHIPS

BY TINA ROSENBERG

"GLOBAL NAVAL SUPERIORITY" was John Lehman's goal when he became secretary of the Navy in 1981, and expanding the Navy from 12 to 15 aircraft carrier groups and from 479 to 600 ships was his way to achieve it. But few people outside the Navy agree with Lehman's strategy. Even the Navy's chief sailor, Admiral James Watkins, has criticized one of Lehman's major justifications for the buildup: a dangerous plan to sail up the Norwegian Sea and attack Soviet naval bases early in a war. Others question the value of strengthening the Navy when the most important battle arena in the Big War, as defense analysts call it, would likely be Europe. "When they came in, the Reagan people were mostly exercised about Soviet ballistic missiles and battle tanks," says Barry Posen, assistant professor of politics and international affairs at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School. "The one area where we had complete, dominant superiority was in aircraft carriers that launch strike aircraft. There, we were ahead 12-0. Then we spent tens of billions of dollars to go ahead 15-0."

Lehman got everything he wanted. Today the count stands at 530 ships. Contracts for the rest are locked in and will hit the magic 600 in 1989. Three new aircraft carriers are under construction and will be finished in 1991, at a cost of $3.7 billion apiece. Even as Congress votes to freeze the defense budget, it's full steam ahead for the 600-ship Navy.

John F. Lehman II, 38 years old when he took office, is one of the youngest Navy secretaries in history. He is also one of the most effective. "If you think of the service secretary's role as promoting his service, you have to admire him," says one of his detractors. "He has been a very effective salesman for the Navy. He's ingratiated himself with the brass, who are usually unimpressed with civilians. He's an activist and a charmer."

Lehman had an unfair advantage over most service secretaries: he was qualified for the job. The post is traditionally a rest home for ribbon-cutters, which is just the way the brass like it. As Richard Nixon once said: "Hell, anybody can do that job. We've had John Warner." Lehman, by contrast, had studied naval strategy and history and served in the Reserves—he still spends two weeks a year as a Naval Reserve helicopter pilot and jet bombardier/navigator.

More important, however, Lehman is cocky enough to believe he could create a Lehman Navy. "He's all business and his wife is all business," says one foreign policy analyst who has known Lehman 15 years. "They're not the kind of people you schmooze with. You just don't get the feeling there's anything there other than drive, ambition, and aggressiveness." He was co-author of two books by the age of 24, a National Security Council staffer at 26, deputy director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency at 32.

When asked about his future, Lehman has a stock response. "I have the best job in the world," he says. "I'll stay here 28 years, just enough to outlast Admiral Gorshkov," his Soviet counterpart. Friends, however, doubt his ambition stops at the water's edge. "He is not unaware of the fact that former secretaries of the Navy are in politics—John Warner, FDR," says one. In the Marine Corps they call Lehman "young Winston," after a certain British First Lord of the Admiralty who went on to higher office.

Lehman's ambitions are not unusual; his tactics are. He has wrecked careers, snookered Congress, and lied to his bosses. He has used a dazzling array of creative tricks to get what he wants. He is famous for knifing his enemies. "He is one of the two or three slimiest men in Washington," says one veteran of three administrations. His genius for bureaucratic politics is the most important reason for Lehman's success with the Navy—and with every other project he's tried. Vicious he is, but in 14 years in government Lehman has never lost a big fight.

Lehman comes from a Catholic family prominent in Philadelphia society; the late Princess Grace was his cousin. He had a comfortable childhood where talk often ran to the Navy. His father, a plant manager for Continental Can, had skippered a gunship in the invasion of Okinawa and the house was filled with model ships and planes. Lehman was an avid rower, winning the national championship in Intermediate Double Sculls in 1963, while he was an undergraduate at St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia.

He was of draft age during Vietnam, but served for only seven weeks during three active duty tours while in the Reserves. After graduating from college he studied inter-

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Tina Rosenberg, a frequent contributor to TNR, wrote on nuclear proliferation in "Bumbling Bomb Squad" (December 17, 1984).

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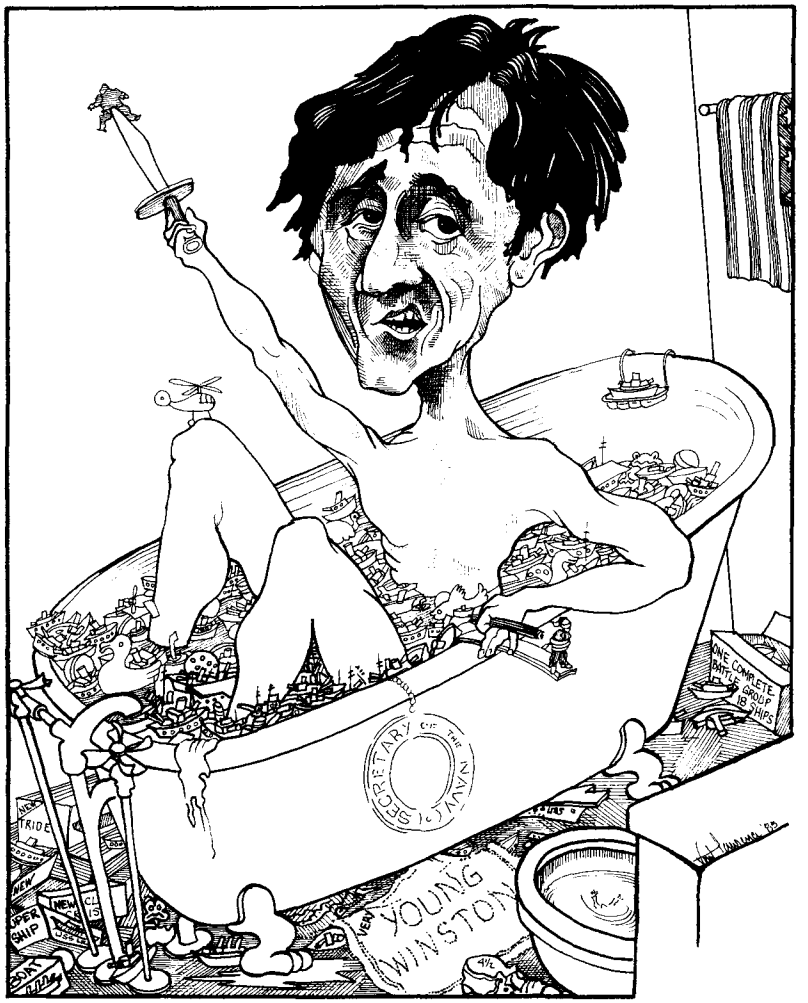
national law and diplomacy at Keyes College in Cambridge, England, and spent vacations at his cousin's palace in Monaco.

After Cambridge, Lehman worked at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, then a part of the University of Pennsylvania. While at FPRI he met several conservative foreign policy scholars who occasionally wandered through, including Henry Kissinger and Richard V. Allen.

Lehman got a job on the Nixon campaign in 1968 through Allen, and after the election joined Kissinger's National Security Council staff to do congressional relations and anything else Kissinger wanted. There Lehman started building his contacts in earnest.

His Georgetown housemate was Edwin Feulner, future head of the Heritage Foundation, who was then working in Melvin Laird's Pentagon. Lehman made friends with several important conservatives in Congress, such as John Tower, who was chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee when he retired last year. Lehman's most important job, however, was to cultivate Democratic senator Henry Jackson, the leading opponent of détente and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. It didn't take long for Lehman to run off and marry the natives—his views on arms control matched those of Jackson, not Kissinger, and he soon became friends with a young Jackson staffer named Richard Perle.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Lehman and Perle waged a guerrilla war against SALT I and the treaty's proponents in the State Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. In June 1972 Jackson met with Nixon in the Rose Garden and asked him to clean the arms control supporters from ACDA and the State Department. Jackson wanted only hard-liners left to enforce SALT I and negotiate SALT II. In return, Jackson promised to refrain from picking a nasty Senate fight on SALT I ratification before the election. Nixon, with his fatal tendency to overreact where his reelection was concerned, agreed.

The project fell to Perle and Lehman. It was an extraordinary situation reminiscent of the "who lost China" firings in the 1950s: Kissinger's staffer fingering and firing the men who negotiated Kissinger's greatest diplomatic achievement, simply because they did their jobs well. Lehman and Perle attacked the project with great zeal; of 16 senior staffers at ACDA in 1972, only three remained two years later. Lehman's reward was the deputy directorship of ACDA in 1975. He was 32.

Nixon and Jackson were satisfied with ACDA's new personnel, but Lehman was not. He continued the purge to the junior levels of the agency. "He has a tendency to classify people as for us or against us," says Leon Sloss, Lehman's friend who was acting ACDA director in 1977. "If you were against him, he tried to isolate you or move you out of the agency."

Lehman left ACDA at the end of Gerald Ford's administration. In an unusual career move, he and Perle decided to open an omelet restaurant in Georgetown. Perle, a passionate chef, would cook, Lehman seat guests. "We had extensive discussions with the real estate people," he says. But Perle decided not to leave Jackson's staff and Lehman found a more profitable venture. He opened a consulting firm called the Abington Corporation, named for his Pennsylvania township. The firm studied market opportunities for defense contractors in the United States and abroad. He paid himself almost $200,000 a year. Perle signed on for a year before going into the Reagan administration. When he left, the two men fought over Perle's compensation and have not been friends since.

While president of Abington, Lehman served as a foreign affairs adviser to the Reagan campaign and conducted two campaigns of his own: one for the post of secretary of the Navy, and the other to preserve the ideological purity of Reagan's policies.

He had enough clout to ensure that Republican moderates at least pretended to listen to him. In the summer

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of 1979 he accompanied Bush to a briefing on SALT II by Deputy National Security Adviser David Aaron at the White House. According to Aaron, it was clear that Bush suffered Lehman's presence merely for political reasons. "At one point John had launched into a diatribe and Bush turned to him and told him to shut up," says Aaron.

Lehman's willingness to lie, even to his boss, to promote his views also came out during the meeting. Lehman told Bush that the Carter administration was the first to consider limits on cruise missiles. It was a flat lie. Lehman knew the Ford administration had proposed strict limits—because he had helped to sabotage the plan, fearful that Kissinger would reach a SALT II agreement. "The truth isn't very important to him," says Aaron. "He makes whatever arguments he wants to make." Lehman denies the incident. "Whatever I said was factual and true," he says. "I have a very good relationship with George."

UPON TAKING OFFICE in 1981, Reagan and Caspar Weinberger knew they wanted to increase the defense budget, but their entire strategy was summed up with the word "more." One of Weinberger's first decisions, thanks largely to lobbying by campaign adviser Lehman, was to reverse the reforms of Secretary Robert McNamara in the 1960s, which centralized power in the Office of the Secretary of Defense at the expense of the services. And more influence for the secretaries quickly came to mean more influence for Lehman.

Lehman took advantage of Reagan's honeymoon to pack his most controversial programs into the initial two Reagan budgets. In his first budget, he won two aircraft carriers, at a cost of $3.67 billion apiece. The second year, Lehman won authorization to refurbish two mothballed World War II battleships. His five-year plan for 1983 to 1987 almost doubled spending for shipbuilding and Naval aircraft procurement. Because of Congress's reluctance to cancel weapons once money has been spent, Lehman could boast at a Brookings Institution seminar in December 1982, "It's too late to stop it . . . we've got the 600-ship Navy."

Told by David Stockman in the fall of 1981 that he would have to make some cuts, Lehman struck from his budget the $1.6 billion he had planned for cargo ships. Instead, he arranged to have the ships built privately. Investors could take advantage of Reagan's new tax laws; the Navy would pay to rent the ships when they were completed. Because the government paid to lease the ships *and* lost tax revenue from the investors, the ships actually cost about 12 percent more than they would have if the Navy had built them, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation. But Lehman managed to get his ships—on time—without spending a cent of his 1983 budget.

Lehman's ships came in despite the objections of two of his bosses, former undersecretary for research and engineering Richard DeLauer and especially Paul Thayer, who became deputy secretary early in 1983 and resigned a year later to face insider trading charges. Thayer believed Lehman was getting too much money—money better spent on modernizing the Army. In 1983 he lobbied in Congress against Lehman's plans and proposed cutting eight billion dollars from shipbuilding and ten billion dollars from Navy aviation in the next five years.

Thayer did not reckon with Lehman's political skills. When Lehman's cost figures came in one billion dollars over budget, he simply inserted a line in the 700-page document that read "unfunded requirements—*negative* $1 billion," and presto, the budget was balanced. When Thayer complained, Lehman played the part of the mayor who coyly tells his city council, "Gosh, there's just no money for the fire department this year." Lehman cut the one billion dollars from the Trident submarine, the sea leg of the nuclear triad.

On August 11, 1983, in a statement naming the new *George Washington* and *Abraham Lincoln* nuclear aircraft carriers, President Reagan also announced his firm support for a 15-carrier, 600-ship Navy. Lehman had simply bypassed Thayer and Weinberger, and walked into the White House waving a press release in the president's face. Reagan signed. When the battle was over and Reagan's budget came out in October, money for the Trident was restored, taken largely from the Army and Air Force budgets. The Navy did not lose a ship.

LEHMAN HAS CLAIMED great success for his reforms of the Navy procurement process. He has increased the number of competitive bid contracts and fixed price contracts where the government splits the cost overrun—or underrun—with the contractor, providing incentive to finish under budget. Lehman says these reforms have saved the Navy $2.4 billion in three and a half years.

But military reformers disagree about Lehman's sincerity. According to the Pentagon's own figures, negotiated profits have risen 75 percent in the last eight years. And even on a fixed price project, a low negotiated profit can become a high final profit. The problem is the Pentagon's practice of "contract nourishment"—design or schedule changes adding to profits. "Ships come in under budget? Under what budget?" says Peter Stockton, an investigator for a House subcommittee. "The baseline changes so much and there's so much contract nourishment you can't even tell how they're measuring it."

Lehman adeptly uses these reforms for his own purposes. He testified before the House sea power subcommittee in April at the height of congressional outrage over $640 toilet seats and contractors who charge the government to board their executives' dogs. Predictably, the representatives' first round of questions centered on procurement abuses. Lehman's response: allow us to achieve economies of scale by building lots of ships, give procurement decisions back to the service secretaries, and plow the savings back into the Navy budget to provide incen-

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tives for managers—all measures that would increase his power.

Lehman has little tolerance for criticism. Shortly after Christmas 1982 Lehman called Robert L. Sproull, the president of the University of Rochester, down from New York for a chat. At the time, Rochester administered a $19 million contract for the Center for Naval Analyses, an independent think tank. Lehman was displeased that CNA conclusions sometimes differed from his own. He asked Sproull to fire CNA's president by the end of the month, and replace him with Assistant Secretary of Defense Francis J. (Bing) West, a man whose enthusiasm for Lehman's strategy earned him the nickname "Maritime Bing" in the Pentagon. Sproull refused.

Back in Rochester, Sproull began hearing rumors that Lehman intended to retaliate by taking the contract away from Rochester and awarding it to the conservative Hudson Institute, which presumably would write papers that Lehman found more agreeable. Sproull raised a stink on the Hill. At a hearing about the matter in the spring of 1983, Lehman told Senator Sam Nunn he didn't like one-source contracts and wanted to hold a competition. "That was news to everyone, including Lehman's staff," says one man who was connected with the incident. Not surprisingly, after the "competition" Lehman awarded the contract to the Hudson Institute. Bing West soon joined Hudson as vice president for national security affairs. Tom Bell, the president of Hudson, became head of CNA in October 1983. According to a former CNA staff member, Bell convened a meeting of CNA two months later and said, "You can be bold and innovative up to the point the secretary of the Navy takes a decision. Then you get on board."

When the Heritage Foundation recently completed a study proposing that the power of the service secretaries be reduced, Lehman acted to kill it. According to Colonel Theodore Crackel, who directed the Heritage study, Lehman called up his old friend Feulner and persuaded him not to publish a policy paper on Crackel's findings. (The completed project eventually became a chapter in a Heritage book.) Lehman denies asking Feulner to spike the study; Feulner says he can't recall the details of the episode.

LEHMAN'S bureaucratic success obscures the flaws in his case for a 600-ship, 15-carrier Navy. One of Lehman's premises for the naval buildup is that if the Soviets attack anywhere, we will wage an offensive war to bottle up the Soviet navy in its home ports.

This idea has never become U.S. policy, for three good reasons. First, surface ships would have to spend several days in hostile waters in full range of Soviet shore aircraft. They would become beach balls for the Soviets long before they reached a Soviet submarine base. Second, most Navy commanders are not willing to risk losing a $17 billion carrier battle group when many think a submarine could launch a cruise missile to do the same job. Third, and most important, striking at the Soviet homeland early in the war could provoke a strong response, possibly escalating a conventional war into a nuclear war.

Lehman's other justification for 15 carrier groups is that the Navy should be perpetually ready "to go in harm's way"—to fight "simultaneously with conflicts in the Far East, Near East, Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean, the oil lifelines around Africa to the United States and Europe, the Mediterranean, North Atlantic, Caribbean, and Eastern Pacific." Naval experts disagree about the usefulness of aircraft carriers, but almost everyone agrees that no matter how effective they are, there is little real advantage in having 15 as opposed to 12. In peacetime carriers spend half the time in or sailing around their home ports in the United States. The extra three carriers mean that we can deploy five overseas at any time instead of four—hardly worth the $51 billion those carrier groups cost.

IN WARTIME the 15 carriers wouldn't be nearly enough to fight in every area on Lehman's list. And in any case we are less likely to go to war with Japan, an island vulnerable to naval siege, than with the Soviet Union, a land power. Carriers would be little more than an annoyance to the Soviet Union during a conventional war in Europe. A carrier group is the carrier and the cruisers, supply ships, submarines, and destroyers that protect it. Of the 90 aircraft on a carrier, 56 merely protect the ship. This leaves only 34 planes to attack targets. "The Soviets wouldn't even notice them," says Edward Luttwak, a senior fellow at Georgetown's Center for Strategic and International Studies and the author of *The Pentagon and the Art of War*. "With our hundreds of land-based aircraft, why should carrier aircraft bother them?"

What would help deter the Soviets in Europe is ground troops. But according to former Carter under secretary of defense Robert Komer, over the past five years the Navy's investment budget—money for weapons, construction, and research and development—averaged nearly double that of the Army. Luttwak says, "The Navy's share of our resources on average has not changed since World War II and in the last few years has increased, even though the Soviet Union, not Japan, is the enemy. But even the total defeat of the Soviet navy would not seriously impair the Soviet Union's capacity for invasion."

In the event of such an invasion the United States would be sorely outnumbered. "The Soviets could build up to 120 divisions in the course of an offensive," Luttwak says. "The United States could contribute 36 and a third—and that's including the National Guard of New York State." We could buy, equip, and man four armored divisions for the price of just the hardware in one carrier battle group. Unfortunately, Lehman has prevailed over all his rivals in the Pentagon. It is hard not to marvel at his skill while wishing he weren't quite so successful. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Let There Be Lightness

Almost You is a first film, and its first shot makes us feel confident. We see a tropical beach, patently a travel poster; then the camera dollies back to show us the window of the travel agency and keeps dollying back into the street as a cab pulls up to the curb. The camera rises to show us a young woman getting out of the cab on the far side to go

Almost You
(TLC Films)

into the agency. One long, simple, graceful camera phrase, well-planned and unobtrusive, that gets the picture going.

And the direction continues with the same unobtrusive, gentle, firm control. The director is Adam Brooks, 28, a Canadian who went to the N.Y.U. Film School, then worked as an assistant, made some short films and a documentary, as well as a one-hour fantasy. (None seen by me.) *Almost You* confirms that he has chosen the right profession.

So has Mark Horowitz, 29, a New Yorker, who wrote the screenplay from an idea by Brooks. Horowitz has produced and directed two short documentaries, including one about the late Lotte Eisner that, we're told, is forthcoming on PBS. Apparently *Almost You* is his first fiction script. The structure is neat, the dialogue is bright, bouncy, and insightful. The principal characters are New Yorkers of about the Brooks-Horowitz age, and the latter understands their speech. This is not just a matter of stenography but of understanding sources, the dialogue that in life takes its patterns from the life-as-show-biz atmosphere of this age group. Horowitz doesn't impaste gags, like Neil Simon: he finds the repartee within people whom he has established as capable of it. For instance, a young man meets the young wife of a young businessman and makes a patronizing remark about people in business. The wife, defensively, asks him what *he* does.

He: I'm an actor.

She: What restaurant?

It's hardly a script, or film, of towering import, but it does have more than entertainment. For one matter, it illustrates again a social phenomenon recurrent in this century: at any given time, young people develop codes in behavior and language that are designed to unify them, even when they happen to be strangers to one another, and to exclude elders. One observer—not, alas, a coeval—noted the verity of their behavior and recognized that they were virtually a different genus.

Horowitz's lively script also confirms a shift in cultural energy. A few decades ago, his gift for sharp scene construction and for glittering chat might have impelled him toward a Broadway career. Today those gifts in people of his age move toward film. Film, financially speaking, is not that much harder to launch than a Broadway production if you posit costs against possible profits, and film will bring a Horowitz closer to more of the people whom he wants to reach—and will do it at five dollars a ticket instead of $35. The point is not that the theater has necessarily suffered a grave loss in Horowitz's choice but that the lighter colors in the theater spectrum, as much a part of the spectrum as any others, seem to be fading.

Anyway, light comedy, on stage or screen, is too often treated sniffily. The ability to do it well is an index of a society's resourcefulness, if not its depth. The demands of such comedy are usually not great, but they are no less than those of the serious work that comes from the same artistic-intellectual middle ground, and the wry fact is that the comedy usually has more staying power than the serious efforts. Which do we prefer now, Kaufman & Hart or Maxwell Anderson? *My Man Godfrey* or *The Good Earth*? Let's not brush off Brooks and Horowitz just because they're light—not, at least, as long as they are truly light.

Lightness does not, of course, exclude theme. *Almost You* is about a man around 30 discovering that his choices in life are narrowing, not through failure but through success. Griffin Dunne plays a young executive in a family textile business who is growing restless as he feels youth going and who transmutes his interior unease into marital trouble. His two uncles, who own the business, want to promote him and crown him as heir. He bucks against the closing of the gilded cage, tacitly sensing that nothing will then lie ahead of him but prosperity, aging, and death. He had felt an itchiness even before his uncles' offer, and his wife had felt it in the tugs and drags between them.

The wife is played by Brooke Adams. (If this were Britain, there would be a letter in *The Times*. "How many have noticed that the star's name, Brooke Adams, is almost a reversal of the director's? Can any reader remember a similar occurrence?") When she leaves the travel agency, after a telephone quarrel with her husband about a trip they had planned, she is hit by a taxi. Following a stay in the hospital, she comes back to their apartment—the very apartment in which he grew up and which she has

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Mikey and Nickey. Peter Falk and John Cassavetes as friends and betrayers, criminal and sexual, in Elaine May's long-unappreciated drama. Technically flawed but unique, unremitting, important. (Reviewed 1/1&8/77)

Streetwise. Seattle's young street people compassionately perceived in an extraordinary documentary. (5/13/85)

What Have I Done to Deserve This? Madrid today. Fiercely black comedy about a coolly amoral family and their friends, trying to make out. Keenly surgical until final wobble. (5/20/85)

Where's Picone? Naples today. Warm farce about a grubby grifter getting into troubles. Giancarlo Giannini embodies a culture as he creates a man. (5/27/85)

SK

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dubbed The Nursery—where she is attended by a physical therapist, Karen Young. Dunne finds Young attractive. Young has a boyfriend, an actor played by Marty Watt. Most of the film's action is made up of various electricities among these four in flashes that outline their characters, along with their blithe acknowledgment of sexual liberality as the medium through which they move the way birds move through the air.

Except for one sequence in a men's room, tasteless and superfluous, *Almost You* quite delicately traces out a hard truth: the smart, *New York* magazine life has to pay its way. The historical high life that it tries to emulate was, more often than not, based on inherited wealth: today's high life is part-time. It depends just as much on nine-to-five, ledger-bound dailiness as did the less fizzy lives of dad and granddad. Under the gaiety are the bills; and they affect not only the dialogue but the patterns of desire.

Light comedy is a fine instrument for that subject, and Brooks has chosen the right players. Dunne, something like an outsize leprechaun refusing any more adulthood than he absolutely must accept, has charm and sex. Adams has already won her membership in the Comedy Club and here certifies it again. Also she is admirably daring in sometimes letting herself be photographed unflatteringly (as she must know), presumably because both she and the director believe that there are 24 hours in the day, not all of them flattering. Karen Young, quiet, thoughtfully erotic, has a gap between her front teeth and a small scar on her chin that become vital to us before the film is very far along. The one problematic member of the quartet is Watt, but he is so unswervingly abrasive that in time we come both to believe in him and in Young's devotion. Miguel Pinero, the author of *Short Eyes*, plays a shop foreman vividly, and Spalding Gray, a prominent off-off-Broadway figure, has one silent amusing moment as a travel agent.

The state, the scientists, and the exploitation of the galaxy.

THE POLITICS OF OUTER SPACE

BY SOLLY ZUCKERMAN

BY GOOD fortune—indeed, almost by accident—Professor Walter A. McDougall has provided us with a timely record of the technological and political events that form the background to today's urgent debate about the military exploitation of space. After failing to get the approval of his colleagues at the University of California at Berkeley for a book about World War I, he decided to tackle the political history of the early space age. It illustrated, as he saw it, not only the difficulties encountered in the international management of "nonterritorial" regions, but also the "interplay of international rivalry and technological change."

The outcome is a well-written book that details the steps that culminated in 1957 in the launch of the first Sputnik. From there he takes the story to the present, when more than 5,000 "objects," which include 200 to 300 operating satellites, are being constantly tracked by radar as they orbit the earth in the company of innumerable pieces of man-made space debris. Whatever argument there may be about Professor McDougall's views of the impact of the advance of technology on political and social change, all who are concerned about the critical state of international relations today will be grateful to him for having spared no effort in tracking down any information that could be relevant to the history of space technology—Russian as well as American. His notes and references are exemplary, and the only pity is that the index is not up to their standard.

The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age
by Walter A. McDougall
(Basic Books, 555 pp., $25.95)

At the start of the story there were no politics. They were not brought into the fictional world of space travel that Jules Verne created, nor had they any role in H. G. Wells's fanciful Martian invasion of 1898. But long before these writers took up their pens, it was known that our globe is a planet that in the course of a year traverses, at a speed of nearly 70,000 miles an hour, an elliptic path of some 580 million miles around the sun, with the moon held within the gravitational field of the earth, around which it revolves at a speed of nearly 2,300 miles an hour. It was also known that other planets in the solar system move in fixed paths in accordance with the gravitational forces that the sun exerts on them, and which to a lesser extent they exert on each other. It was also clear that if it ever became possible to shoot a man from the earth beyond the limits of its atmosphere at a speed sufficient to counteract the gravitational force that would otherwise pull him back, he would coast weightless in space around the globe, or he would fly, if he had been propelled with sufficient velocity, to the moon and the stars.

From Professor McDougall we learn that the first person to apply a scientific mind to these possibilities, and particularly to the problem of rocket-powered flight in space, was the Russian Konstantin Tsiolkovsky. By the 1880s, this single-minded genius was writing about the impact that the condition of zero-gravity exercises on the classical laws of motion. He also conceived of reactive flight outside the atmosphere two decades before heavier-than-air flight within it became a reality.

Lord Zuckerman was formerly chief scientific adviser to the British government and is the author of, among other books, *Scientists and War* and *Nuclear Illusion and Reality* (Viking).

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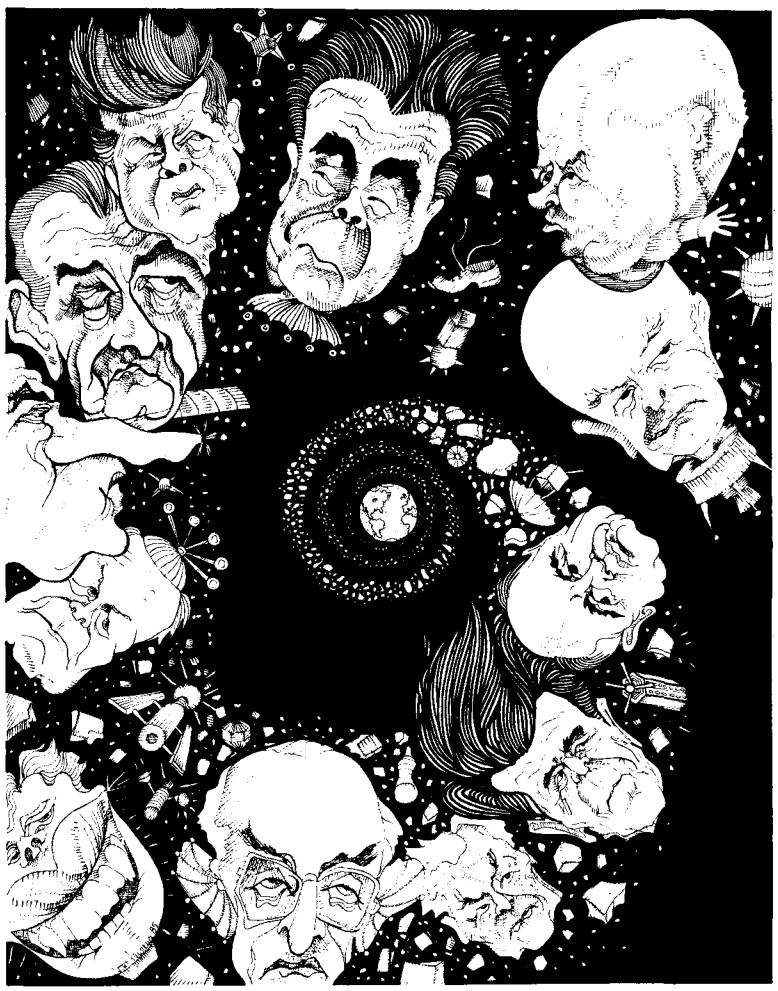
He knew how to calculate the velocity—about five miles a second—at which an object of given weight had to be shot into space in order to coast around the globe, and also the escape velocity of some seven miles a second needed to carry it beyond the earth's gravitational field. Correspondingly, Tsiolkovsky knew how to calculate the power or thrust that a rocket would need to generate in order to achieve these required speeds. By 1903 he had published a treatise on "the mathematics of orbital mechanics and designed a rocket powered by the (precocious) combination of liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen."

If the Russians did not succeed in building rockets with the power necessary to take men into space before Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939, they had certainly built smaller ones. For Tsiolkovsky was not the only Russian to be enthused by the prospects of flight both within and beyond the earth's atmosphere, and even about the possibility of establishing human colonies in space. Yuri Kondratyuk, one of his colleagues, early on proposed the use of solar power in spacecraft, and considered the design of landing craft or modules for lunar and planetary visits. "The Soviet Union," Professor McDougall tells us, "was the first government to endorse and support the goal of spaceflight." An Institute of Aerodynamics already existed (it was founded in 1906), but in 1918, immediately after the revolution, the new government decided to establish a Central Institute of Aerodynamics. A central Bureau for the Study of the Problems of Rockets followed in 1924.

Enthusiasm for space was not confined to Russia, but other industrialized countries lagged far behind. In the United States the "jealous and secretive" Robert Goddard worked alone, experimenting with liquid-fuel rockets as far back as 1926. By the time the Second World War started, he had built a rocket 22 feet long, which carried enough fuel to develop an average thrust of 825 pounds. Some members of the Army's ordinance plants were also trying to develop small rockets for air-to-air combat, but Goddard's idiosyncratic isolation meant that neither his vision nor his achievements attracted the effective attention of the authorities, in the way that the work of Tsiolkovsky, Kondratyuk, F. A. Tsander, and many others had done in Russia.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

In Germany events moved differently. As early as 1929 the army had called for the development of a liquid-fuel rocket, and a year or so later work was started on the design of a jet-powered engine for aircraft. Wernher von Braun, a highly ambitious and personable young engineer, was recruited, and by the autumn of 1939 he and his team had moved to an isolated test-site at Peenemünde. What happened there is still fresh in many a memory. British intelligence was slow in persuading Churchill that Hitler was developing one of the secret weapons with the help of which he hoped to win the war. Thus it was not until the second half of 1943 that the Royal Air Force carried out the first of a series of raids against the rocket establishment. But by then the V-1, a small pilotless glide aircraft that was the prototype for the cruise missile of today, was already rolling off the production line, to be followed not long after—but fortunately too late to affect the outcome of the war—by the V-2, a true ballistic missile. Both weapons were used in attacks against England, the first wave of V-1s launched at London in daylight a week after the start of the Normandy invasion in June 1944. These small machines flew in at about a thousand feet until their engines cut out, leaving people below to wonder where they would land and explode. The first V-2s followed in September, unheralded (because supersonic), suddenly descending to wreak death and destruction with their 1,600-pound warheads. Several other types of rocket weapons were developed by both sides, mainly for use on the battlefield, but the V-1 and V-2 were the only relatively big ones that were used during the war.

By January of 1945, von Braun, sensing that he was on the losing side, decided to make his way to the American lines. Five hundred of his team, the best of the lot, together with all his records, went with him, and 115 soon settled in the United States. Only one German designer of note was left for the Russians to recruit. But as Grigory Tokady, a leading Russian rocketeer who later defected to the West, discovered, the Russians were not behind the Germans in ideas and theoretical knowledge. Stalin's purges of the 1930s had not deprived the Russian space program of any of its leading lights. What had set it back was the overrunning of western Russia in the

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early part of the war—and the fact that the Russian rocketeers had to turn their attention to more immediate problems of military research and development. The Russian weakness lay in their lack of technical expertise; after the war they decided to transfer to the USSR some hundreds of the lesser technical fry who had been part of von Braun's team. Seven years later, the Russians concluded that they had learned all they could from them, and most were repatriated to Germany.

SPACE technology entered the political arena after von Braun began work under U.S. Army auspices to build more powerful rockets than the single-stage V-2. A bitter battle started among the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy to determine which was to lead the American space program. The Russians avoided a similar dispute by establishing a single Department for Rocketry and Radar, which they provided with vast resources. New rocket ranges were built, and plans were immediately laid for the design of an intercontinental missile. Although the Russian aerodynamicists and engineers, including such distinguished figures as A. N. Tupolev, had to work in "gulags," everything that could be provided to further their work was theirs for the asking. By 1949 an improvement of the V-2 with a range of 550 miles was supplied to units of the Red Army. By 1952 an IRBM—intermediate range ballistic missile—was manufactured, and the Russian rocketeers were pressing on with the design of an ICBM, the one that in 1961 was to shoot Yuri Gagarin into space, and that was also able to carry the nuclear warheads that the Russians were already manufacturing.

More than anything else, it was the launching of Sputnik I in October 1957 that galvanized the space race. The whole world, and not just the United States, was startled. If the Russians could put an artificial satellite into space, they could deliver a nuclear warhead wherever they wanted. The American interservice dispute had to be settled, and settled it was, by the usual kind of compromise. A civilian-led NASA was established, and each of the services was provided with a piece of the R&D pie with which to pursue its military concerns with space. It appeared, to a world worried by thoughts of nuclear war in space, that space technology was under civilian control. In fact the United States provided itself with a triad of nuclear forces (air-, land-, and sea-based) not because of a critical analysis of what was needed to establish an invulnerable deterrent, but because of service rivalry. Needless to say, the Russians were only too ready to follow suit and establish their own triad of strategic nuclear forces; for them the civil and military aspects of space had never been separated.

Almost alone among those of his countrymen who shaped public opinion, President Eisenhower was unbelieving and unmoved by cries that America was behind in space and in the arms race. Early in his presidency he had to deal with the fictitious cry that there was a "bomber gap." He was not going to be panicked now by cries of a "missile gap." Professor McDougall records the amazing range of figures that the three services were bandying around to whip up enthusiasm for their missile programs. The Air Force declared that the USSR had deployed at least 300 ICBMs by 1960. The Navy's figure was ten. The Army's and the CIA's estimate was 125 to 150, but after the reconnaissance satellite Samos 2 orbited the earth in January 1961 the figure was reduced to 60. A few months later, after further space reconnaissance, the figure became "at most fourteen." The missile gap, like the bomber gap, was a piece of arms-race propaganda. To help him judge which of the many much-vaunted ventures into the technological unknown was worth supporting—and for what reason—Eisenhower appointed a presidential science adviser and a Science Advisory Committee.

Professor McDougall makes no mention of the fact that the post-Sputnik hysteria about the presumed technological superiority of the Soviets also resulted in a call for the mobilization of all the technical brains available to the West. In 1956, when the world was starting to worry about nuclear fallout and growing East-West tensions, the North Atlantic Council set up a small committee of foreign ministers to consider, among other matters, Allied cooperation in science and technology. A special task force under the chairmanship of Professor Joseph Koepfli of Caltech (at the time also scientific adviser to the State Department) was then convened to consider how this could best be done. Its deliberations—I was

Robert A. Dahl

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the British delegate—were made all the more urgent by the launching of Sputnik I, and our recommendation that a NATO Science Committee be set up was immediately accepted. The committee remains a highly successful and thriving institution; still, as it turned out, it has never played a significant part in the short-term development of NATO's military strength.

DESPITE Eisenhower's skepticism, the "missile gap" became one of the major issues in the campaign that brought John F. Kennedy to the White House. Ironically, it was a myth that had been encouraged by Khrushchev and his generals, whose purpose was to secure whatever propaganda value they could from the Soviet Union's presumed superiority in space. As Professor McDougall puts it, "Secrecy, the most potent weapon of the totalitarian state, permitted the deception and fed Western imaginations." "A strategy of deception, therefore, capitalized on Soviet strengths and cloaked Soviet weaknesses."

Eisenhower's constant concern about the way secrecy exacerbated the mutual suspicions of the two superpowers, and so spurred the arms race, led him in 1956 to lay before the Russians his first "Open Skies" proposal. They rejected it as a ploy. Early in 1957 he tabled at the U.N. General Assembly a further and more detailed proposal whereby "future development in outer space would be directed exclusively to peaceful purposes and scientific purposes" by bringing "the testing of [satellites and missiles] under international inspection and participation." This offer was also rejected by Khrushchev. (So was his own, I seem to remember, when he suggested some years later that the United States and the Soviet Union should exchange the space photographs they were taking of each other's territory.) The net effect was that Eisenhower could not prevent the mid-1950s from becoming what Professor McDougall calls "the most dynamic and imaginative years in the history of American military R&D. . . . Every space booster and every strategic missile in the American arsenal, prior to the Space Shuttle and the Trident submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) of the 1970s, date from these years." We need have no doubt that the same thing was happening in the Soviet Union.

The fact is that neither side was prepared to take the risk of being outdone by the other. Space surveillance of the Soviet Union was essential to the United States. How otherwise could the American people be satisfied that the USSR, which was adamantly opposed to "intrusive inspection," would not breach whatever arms control agreement it might sign? Both sides were testing ballistic missiles. Both were beginning to think about the design of antisatellite weapons, which they realized would be a major threat also to the deployment of reconnaissance and other kinds of spy satellites. Weapons in space, moreover, would be a threat to other nations, all of which had the right to deploy communications, meteorologic, mapping, and navigational satellites. Questions such as how far a nation's sovereign "territory" extended into the sky, where "space" began, and whether the American satellites could lawfully overfly Russian territory (and vice versa) had to be settled; and they were to some extent when it was agreed that, as their major contributions to the International Geophysical Year of 1957-58, both superpowers would launch satellites for peaceful scientific observations.

The testing of nuclear weapons in space was foreclosed by the Partial Test Ban Treaty of the summer of 1963. Later that year the United States and the Soviet Union jointly agreed that neither would ever place nuclear weapons in orbit. This agreement was followed by a "Declaration of Legal Principles" governing the exploration and use of outer space, which in 1967 became enshrined in the U.N. Outer Space Treaty. This treaty, to which both superpowers were party, "denuclearized" outer space; it also disallowed the militarization of the moon—an idea that had long been canvassed, and that indeed is still occasionally voiced by certain extraterrestrial warriors. A convention requiring the registration by the U.N. of all objects launched into space followed in 1976—but without any requirement that satellites should be examined by an international authority in order to determine their purpose.

WITH these quasi-legal niceties out of the way by the end of the 1960s, the superpowers proceeded with their separate space programs, military and civil. Professor McDougall tells how President Kennedy's science adviser, Jerome Wiesner, as well as his entire Science Advisory Committee, were totally opposed to the Apollo man-on-the-moon project, and argued that the cost of this venture was totally incommensurate with its possible scientific value. The president decided, however, that the project should go ahead for reasons of political prestige. He had another reason. By taking up slack in the aerospace industry, Apollo would reduce the pressure on the Defense Department to underwrite programs that could not be justified strategically (for example, the ill-fated Skybolt). Once the decision was taken, Wiesner and his committee fully cooperated with NASA in deciding which of three possible methods of effecting a landing on the moon would be the safest and the best. Professor McDougall exaggerates somewhat when he writes that Wiesner and von Braun "crossed swords" on the subject during the course of a presidential visit to Huntsville, Alabama, where a static test of the Saturn rocket had been arranged. I was fortunate to have been included in the party, and the discussion that reporters overheard and described as a confrontation simply revealed that it had not been decided whether it was best to land a man on the moon by way of a lunar module or by some other method. What they did not overhear was Harold Brown, then the Pentagon's director of defense research and engineering, remarking in a loud voice as von Braun was introducing half a dozen or so of his colleagues to the president, "They haven't had so big a day since Hitler inspected them at Peenemünde." Von Braun was probably too intent on his introductions to hear, but I remember hoping that the president did.

PROFESSOR McDougall does not ask whether the enormous cost of the Apollo program was rewarded by any significant scientific gain, or whether the amazing courage of Neil Armstrong, who sent the message from the moon about a giant leap forward for mankind, had any lasting propaganda value. The Russians apparently did not have a man-on-the-moon program. Not long after, however, they landed a radio-controlled moon-buggy, which automatically transmitted observations about the lunar surface. It even sent back to earth samples of lunar rock that, like those collected by the Apollo crews, very much resembled rocks on earth; they put to rest some speculation and provided an experimental basis for the refinement of the theory of lunar evolu-

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tion. It is a moot point which feat was technically the more outstanding—automatic transshipment of lunar rock to the earth or bringing the samples back by hand. It is anybody's guess as to the prestige value of being a pedestrian as well as an automobilist on the moon.

Professor McDougall's narrative of events comes to an end at this point, when both the U.S. and the USSR seemed content with the way things were going. Neither saw any merit in placing nuclear weapons, or indeed any weapons, in space, but both felt free to pursue their military reconnaissance and other programs. Cooperation with other countries was of no interest to the Russians. To the Americans, "competition was the motive force for space spending." They were ready to cooperate for scientific purposes, but when it came to space engineering, commercial competition ruled. Professor McDougall records how many spacecraft were launched by both superpowers up to the start of the 1980s, and provides figures for their presumed expenditure on R&D, but he tells us far too little about the thriving space programs of other countries, and nothing much about the series of Russian space stations (one crew of cosmonauts recently lived for nearly eight months in Salyut 7, which was serviced regularly by supply ships) or about the friendly exchanges that go on between NASA and its opposite number in the Soviet Union, particularly in the study of biomedical problems. Sadly, too, there is no discussion of the impact of the bilateral ABM Treaty of 1972 on the politics of space, or any reference to its significance for President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative.

INSTEAD we are constantly confronted by Professor McDougall's deep and despairing concern about the impact of technology on political action, an issue that leads him to conclusions that I find somewhat dubious. His pessimism derives from what he senses will be the inevitable outcome if a country's technological effort is directed by its government, and what he predicts will be the consequences of what he calls "command technology" and "command innovation." He defines command technology as "the institutionalization of technological change for state purposes." This came of age, he says, in World War II, when "an evolutionary leap" occurred "in the relationship of the state to the creation of new

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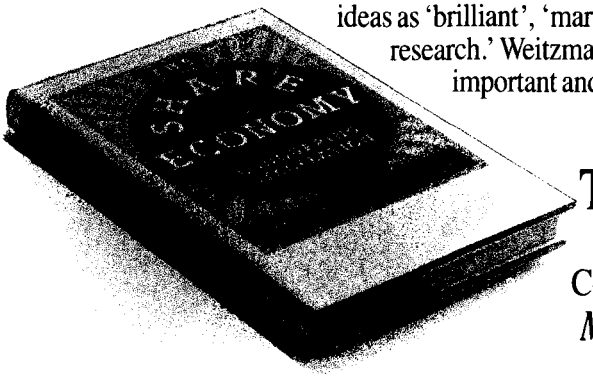

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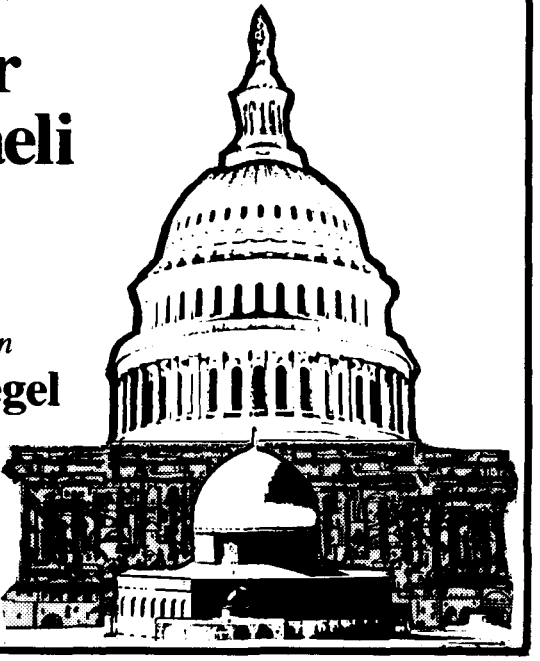

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knowledge. Not only did the Soviets rethink and reaccelerate their R&D machinery in these years, but Western governments came to embrace the model of state-supported, perpetual technological revolution, create national infrastructures for such a program, and quintuple their funding for R&D in support of national goals." No longer, writes Professor McDougall, did state and society merely adjust to new "tools and methods"; instead they "took upon themselves the primary responsibility for generating new technology," with the consequence that not only the Soviet Union, which had "reified the notion of centralized mobilization of science and technology in peacetime," but all governments have become revolutionary. The Soviet Union, a Communist state, was always a technocracy, always in a race for technological superiority. The United States, a democracy, has had to become one.

BOTH OF THEM, Professor McDougall tells us, "derived political goals, be they obnoxious or benign, from some impulse or another, and then applied military technology to their achievement." This process he is prepared to regard as "excusable." But he rejects as "too terrible to entertain" the alternative notion—that in an age of nuclear weapons technological change can be an "independent variable." Still, when we reach the final chapter of the book, we find that Professor McDougall has become fearful both of "command technology" *and of* technology as an independent variable. McDougall the historian has become McDougall the moralist, going with those, like Bertrand Russell, Aldous Huxley, and Leo Tolstoy, who "sensed the dark side of state-supported 'invention of the future.' " Finally, he also sees the day when science "will have reached absolute limits in its quest for the origins, extent, composition, and fate of the material universe. When that day arrives," so he writes, "the technocratic pump may cavitate, the human heart have a meltdown, and science become again a branch of moral philosophy." These are strange words to find at the end of a book that began by offering some hope that political choice could prevent technology from leading mankind into the abyss.

There are two issues in the argument that lead Professor McDougall to throw up his hands in despair at the thought that "the unending race to keep up with foreign military and economic competition threatens to erode the very values that make one's society worth defending in the first place," and which also lead him to predict that one day the methods of scientific inquiry will exhaust their value. The general question concerns the relation of society to technology and science, about which a vast literature exists; the more specific problem is the meaning and limits of what he calls "command technology," and the dependence or independence of technology as a variable that determines human affairs.

LET US LOOK at the first question. Is it possible to separate the abstraction "society" from the tools that are used by the individuals who constitute the society? We all know that the life of the food-gatherer and hunter was conditioned by his knowledge of the seasons, and by the tools that he fashioned out of stone and wood; that the settled village life which followed was made possible because of an understanding that led to the domestication of plants and animals, and because a new corpus of associated arts and crafts had slowly emerged; that the metal-working and textile industries went on empirically developing well into the 18th century, with owners and workers adapting accordingly. In those days the authority of organized society, in the form of the state, had no need to "command technology." Technology was the very essence of society.

The pace of technological change accelerated sharply during the 18th and 19th centuries. This sometimes led to social unrest, but it did not take long, again, before those who had the money were eagerly demanding whatever fruits of new invention were regarded as desirable. Almost all the new mechanical contraptions of the industrial revolution were invented by individuals who were trying to find better ways of doing what was already being done. They had no formal scientific education, and most of them worked purely empirically. They were not commanded by anybody or anything.

It was at this stage that science started to come to the aid of technology, first by providing an understanding of some of its workings (for example, Pasteur's elucidation of the process of fermentation), second by the rapid rise in scientific experimentation and professionalism. In turn, technology provided science with new tools with which to delve further into the unknown. Everything Professor McDougall writes about the enormous technological advances of the years since the end of World War II merely illustrates the power of modern engineering when allied, however remotely, to science. What is more, all these recent advances have become integrated into the fabric of society in basically the same way as the more mundane advances of an earlier industrial age. Any technological change that results in a presumed benefit, whether by reducing the burden of labor or the need for labor, or by adding to the pleasures or security of life, will be absorbed into the fabric of society—which, of course, becomes transformed in the process.

I SERIOUSLY doubt that it matters to society at large which way technological change comes about—whether as a result of the inspiration of a lone inventor, or because of the spontaneous or contrived demand of the market, or in response to "command technology," either from the state or from, say, an international pharmaceutical company. It will, in any case, eventually be absorbed. The process of absorption may well cause domestic political difficulties, as old industry is forced to give way to new, as the labor cost of production declines. It may cause international difficulties, either because international trade is disturbed or because radio and television, by instantaneously making all parts of the world aware of new wealth-creating developments wherever they may occur, widen the political gulf between the haves and have-nots. It may mean, moreover, that some hidden social debt is being incurred because the new technology results in environmental damage. But the absorption of technology will nonetheless continue.

Technology itself will never automatically sound a warning against any deleterious effects, whether social or material (for example, the acid rain problem). Nor could technology itself generate an automatic warning that a war in space, or a war in which nuclear weapons were used, would be disastrous for mankind. In the end it is for society to decide whether technological change is for good or for bad.

I turn now to the more specific issue. How dependent or independent are

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significant discoveries in science and technology? The fact is that, while governmental "command technology" can see to it that the material resources are there to encourage advances in particular directions, so-called "breakthroughs" cannot be commanded. Governments have tried to "command" the design of an economic wide-bodied supersonic carrier aircraft with a range greater than that of the Concorde. The Concorde is still the best we have. The truth is that strokes of technological genius, for example John Randall's almost casual discovery in 1940 of the cavity magnetron that made microwave radar possible, cannot be "commanded." They just happen. Great leaps in scientific understanding are even rarer. No one could have decreed that Einstein would transform the world in which we live with his general theory of relativity, or that the chemical structure of the DNA molecule should be unraveled just when it was.

NOT ONLY are we always ignorant of the next major advance that may be made in scientific understanding; we may, because of the prejudice of conventional belief, be blinding ourselves to some new scientific "truth" that has already been discovered, or alternatively promoting what might turn out to be false. Mendel published his basic law of genetics in 1866, but despite his efforts to publicize his discovery it passed unnoticed until 1900. The classical and highly important kinetic theory of gases was elucidated in 1845 by a man called Waterston, who immediately submitted a paper on the subject for publication by the Royal Society, but because it did not fit the conventional wisdom of the day it was suppressed for nearly half a century.

Discovery may be mistimed, furthermore, even when the climate for acceptance is totally favorable. Charles Babbage, a pillar of the British establishment in the early 19th century and the founder of the Astronomical and Statistical Societies, formulated by the 1830s the logical principles on which the modern computer is based. Despite a government grant to help him develop his "calculating machine," however, he could not bring it to fruition because of the limitations of the wheel and machinery of the day. Not until H. H. Aiken of Harvard employed electromagnetic relays in 1937 could Babbage's principles be put into effect. There are other examples of a similar kind.

In an age of nuclear weaponry, it may be disturbing to think of technological advances as "independent variables." Nonetheless, significant new scientific or technological knowledge will always be "independent" at the moment it surfaces. It is the use that is made of new science or new technology, whether planned or unplanned, that becomes the dependent variable. If President Reagan supposes that some blinding new discoveries will be made in response to his plea to the scientific world to make the American people invulnerable to nuclear ballistic missiles, he is deluding himself. Of course it is conceivable that they might be. But it is more realistic to suppose that his "technology command" is no more than a challenge to exploit to the greatest extent possible what basic knowledge already exists. And if it ever proved possible to make a defense in space work perfectly, it would allow no time for human reason to influence the millisecond reactions of infrared detectors and laser beams. There would be no place in it, ironically, for presidents, secretaries of state, or generals. Technology would, to use Professor McDougall's phrase, really have come of age. A technological

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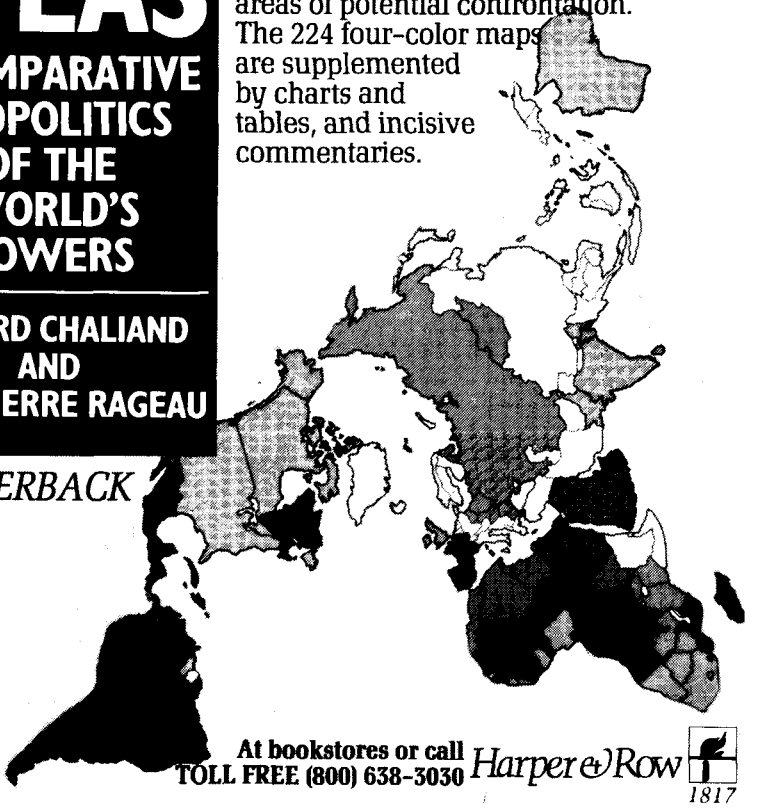

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variable originally dependent on presidential command would have become independent.

I would judge that Professor McDougall's pessimism is due not so much to any worry about the institutionalization of science in the service of the state as it is to fears about the continuing arms race. He tells us that Edwin Land, who invented the Polaroid camera (and who also did much to help the development of reconnaissance satellites), warned Eisenhower that because so much technology and science was being done by large groups or by the state itself, the United States was more and more tending to resemble the Soviets, "however much we disclaim this." To be sure, there was direct involvement of the state and of large groups. Still, this convergence did not mean that science in the United States was becoming politically institutionalized in the same way as it had been in the USSR from the time of the revolution. Eisenhower himself was more to the point in his farewell address. He knew that he had been unable to check the forces ranged against him by the armed services and by their opposite numbers in the USSR, and that in consequence he had failed to curb the arms race. It was for that reason that he warned, as Professor McDougall reminds us, that

> the prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by Federal employment, project allocations, and the power of money is ever present—and is gravely to be regarded. . . . Yet in holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.

We need to remember today that the elite to whom Eisenhower referred was made up of only those who had committed themselves to the mechanics of the arms race and, to a lesser extent, to the race in space. There are probably more such people around today. But today, too, there is much more to science than defense and space, and far more elite science outside than inside the aerospace industries. The use of science in the service of the state is vital in the furtherance of public health and welfare, and in the regulation and monitoring of all public services. More than that, scientists are citizens of the state, and many of them are better able to see beyond the immediate technological horizon than can some politicians or generals who may be enjoying the power of command. The convergence of the United States and the Soviet Union has not meant that American scientists need fear the fate of a Sakharov. By being critical about the uses to which technology is put, they may help see that it is directed, if not to the best goals, at least away from those that could be the most disastrous.

A CRITIC APART

Randall Jarrell's Letters: An Autobiographical and Literary Selection edited by Mary Jarrell

(Houghton Mifflin, 540 pp., $29.95)

The flash and wit of Randall Jarrell's poetry reviews made him the most feared and admired critic of his generation. His poems, on the other hand, identify him with outsiders, the downtrodden, the baffled American innocents who refuse to become adults. These impulses were reciprocal, not contradictory, in Jarrell's writing. In sympathetic dramatic monologues he took on the roles of lonely women, childlike soldiers, lost children. But this very sympathy with the marginal was twinned with the child's privilege to be tactlessly true, bitingly candid. ("Dear Jarrell," the critic R. W. Flint wrote to console Robert Lowell for an unfavorable review, "he annihilates us all and by our stripes he is healed.") Praise from Jarrell, on the other hand, was an act of almost mystical identification. Adrienne Rich remarked that "a poem—including those very different from his own—was a natural environment for him; he en-

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tered a strange poem as a great naturalist must enter a strange forest, every nerve awake—but as a naturalist who was himself part bird, part liana, part jaguar."

Rich's comment helps us understand why this collection of his letters, offered for the first time, contains little of the strange, the essential, Jarrell. Social exchange was less his medium than the heady air of poetry. As he wrote to his first sweetheart, in a rare autobiographical aside: "I've lived all over, and always been separated from at least half of a very small family, and been as alone as children ever are. As long as I can remember, I've been so different from everybody else that even trying to be like them couldn't occur to me." Letters from Jarrell's youth and to his family have evidently not survived to be included in this edition. In letters to others he never mentioned them.

THE BARE facts of his childhood, returned to in his last volume of poems, *The Lost World*, are that, born in Nashville, he spent his early years with incompatible parents in Southern California. His happiest times were with his "mama" and "pop," his grandparents, amid the exotica of Hollywood. His parents were divorced before he was ten, and he returned to Nashville with his mother and brother.

Except for the letters to his two wives, Mackie, from whom he was divorced in 1951, and Mary, the editor of these letters, the correspondence is not intimate or much preoccupied with the dailiness of life. Jarrell takes little interest in exploring and extending relationships. He didn't use letters for self-analysis or gossip, as Virginia Woolf did. Nor did he write the kind of breezy, affectionate literary gazette for which Robert Lowell was noted. Nor was he drawn to descriptive styles, like those startling detailed presentations of the world that were Elizabeth Bishop's way of assimilating herself to the felt strangeness of life.

When the Jarrell correspondence begins he is a brilliant young student and instructor at Vanderbilt and Kenyon. His letters to Allen Tate, to Edmund Wilson at *The New Republic*, and to Robert Penn Warren at *Southern Review* are staccato reports and requests by a young man eager to place his essays and poems. It is only when these somewhat unfocused letters are read beside his real work—the poetry and the criticism of the late 1930s and early 1940s—that we recognize his iron determination to establish and champion new kinds of poetry and criticism, which he would call, too loosely, in an influential essay on Robert Lowell, "postmodern."

However grateful he was, and however dependent on John Crowe Ransom, Tate, and Warren, his letters to and about them define attitudes strongly critical of theirs. At Kenyon, in fact, he had been something of a maverick: a reader of Auden, a leftist in the midst of southern agrarians, and largely unpopular with his fellows. Mr. Ransom felt that his brilliant young colleague had an unsystematic mind. Jarrell concurred in a letter to Tate: "I think all in all I've got a poetic and semifeminine mind, I don't put any real faith in abstractions or systems; . . . When I hear people talking gravely and importantly and at great length about these same 'ideas'; I can't help thinking childishly, 'How ridiculous for these two grown-up men to take all this so seriously and finally.' "

For Jarrell there was always the sense that the New Critics were too self-consciously "manly," arbitrary, inflexible—and too dogged by the burden of Eliot and historical modernism. When Tate

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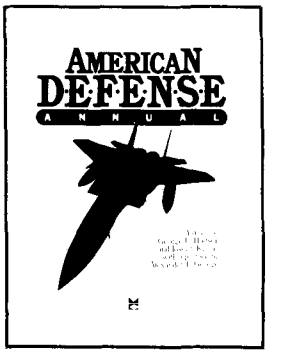

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criticized the "limp" meters of Jarrell's poems, the latter replied that it was "the defect of a quality. . . . I'd rather seem limp and prosaic than false or rhetorical. I want to be rather like speech." "False and rhetorical" was, of course, a rebuke to Tate, whose work the younger poet felt too stiff, lacking in the ability to identify itself with anything "non-Allen." "Allen never feels the need of any *motivation* of violence—violence is to him, perhaps unconsciously, an intrinsic good." Warren, too, "manages his life by pushing all the evil in it out into the poems and novels," and not sufficiently mixing it with the good. Jarrell was looking for meters and forms that accommodated more of the human voice and its contradictions—hence his attraction, from early on, to dramatic monologues.

It was at this stage in Jarrell's career that the single most riveting encounter in these letters takes place. Robert Lowell had already published (in 1944) *Land of Unlikeness*, a book much indebted to Allen Tate and shadowed by Tate's forms and violence of tone. Lowell was in the course of revising the book, adding and deleting poems, for what would become his first commercial volume, *Lord Weary's Castle*, the book that brought him lightning fame. He and Jarrell had known one another, contrary to some of the sentimentalizing legends, in an uneasy and antagonistic friendship at Kenyon. Jarrell showed little interest in Lowell's early work, and in letters to Tate and Warren barely mentions him. "There are five or six poems by Cal Lowell (original and goodish, though perfunctory and queer) in the latest *Sewanee Review*." But Jarrell's interest was truly piqued when he saw Lowell revising himself away from Tate. Lowell was to become *the* example of the new poet for Jarrell, and he lavished letters and suggestions at a time when Lowell most welcomed them. Few poets can have received such detailed scrutiny and such trustworthy counsel from a contemporary.

Without challenging Lowell's ferocity, Jarrell helped him draw out intimate voices and autobiographical detail buried in more public vituperative poems. The book remained bitterly satirical, denouncing Roosevelt's war, capitalism, and Lowell's native New England. But Jarrell excavated some of the personal material—family poems, memories of childhood—which involved Lowell as a *character*, not just a detached and sometimes starchily self-righteous prophet. More important, Jarrell suggested ways in which these segments could help explain why the speaker was so violent. In one instance ("Rebellion") he convinced Lowell to treat directly an incident in which he strikes down his father, rather than masking it, as he had in his first versions, behind the story of Cain and Abel.

RANDALL JARRELL BY JACK COUGHLIN

"I think your biggest limitations right now," Jarrell wrote him, "are (1) not putting enough about *people* in the poems—they are more about the actions of you, God, the sea and cemeteries than they are about the 'actions of men'; (2) being too harsh and severe—but this is already changing very much for the better too, *I* think. Contemporary satires (which you don't seem to write any more) are your weakest sort of poem, and are not really worth wasting your time on; your worst tendency is to do too-mannered, mechanical, wonderfully contrived, exercise poems, but these you don't do much when you feel enough about the subject to start from a real point of departure in contemporary real life." Jarrell reiterated his feeling, both in his letters and in a landmark review of *Lord Weary's Castle*, that these "are some of the best poems anybody has written in our time, and sure to be read for hundreds of years. I am *sure* of this." There are no peaks of critical involvement as exciting as these in the remainder of this volume of the letters, except for some engaging critiques offered to Adrienne Rich after her early work appeared.

By the early 1950s Jarrell's literary force is considerably tempered. His driving impulse to outflank the New Critics has prevailed. In his poetry editorship at *The Nation* (1946-47), in his essays and reviews, especially in those he collected for *Poetry and the Age* (1953), he pressed for a canon that bypassed modernism and its anxious imitators. He "presented," rather than analyzed, poets to whom his mentors had paid little attention: Whitman, Frost, William Carlos Williams. He had long since co-opted Robert Lowell and Elizabeth Bishop as the best of the new poets—Lowell for his psychological intensity, Bishop for the direct witty voice that seems to underline every poem with "I have seen it." His taste was the best, but his

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vague insistence on the "real" or "authentic" voice as the test of a poem left room for later critical abuse, and perhaps opened a little too wide the teeming gates of "self-expression."

Jarrell enjoyed educating the women he knew. He sent long reading lists to Elisabeth Eisler, a young Austrian with whom he had a platonic affair during and after the Salzburg Seminar in 1948. He also seemed to take a tutorial pleasure in the long series of courtship letters to Mary von Schrader, who became his second wife in 1952. There are other flashes of Jarrell the critic from time to time: of Peter Viereck, for example, "He's the only man I know who *couldn't* write an anonymous letter—he even signs bombs." There are few, but striking, portraits of writers: tonic insights into the troubled R. P. Blackmur, whom he came to know at Princeton; a glimpse of Auden, whose

> face has got *so* heavy and wrinkled and powerful and old (he's only 44) so that he looks like a disenchanted lion, almost.

Most memorably there are encounters with Robert Frost:

> I always treated him, when we talked, as Gorki did Tolstoy—as a unique natural phenomenon beyond good and evil. . . . (I *loved* to listen to him, really was fond of him, and knew I was, so to speak, getting to see a waterspout inside a rainbow.) . . . He'd stay with us in Greensboro and talk all day—for one interesting, awful, and touching day about nothing but his family: he was seeing his grand-daughter that night and just seeing her transformed him into a younger, bitterer, uneasier man full of memories of unavenged slights.

SAD TO SAY, this collection of the letters is thoroughly unreliable as a reference book. The publisher has forgone checking and allowed it to appear riddled with factual errors in the notes and commentary. Allen Tate, for example, did not found the *Sewanee Review*. Nor did Marianne Moore work at the Dial Press when Jarrell published a volume of poems with them. The cartoon view of literary history climaxes when Wallace Stevens is said to have been absent from a Library of Congress party in 1962 because "he was noted for avoiding such occasions." (He had been dead seven years!)

One day this collection is bound to be superseded. Mrs. Jarrell was seriously hampered in her efforts because Peter Taylor, a close friend of her husband since Vanderbilt days, did not release

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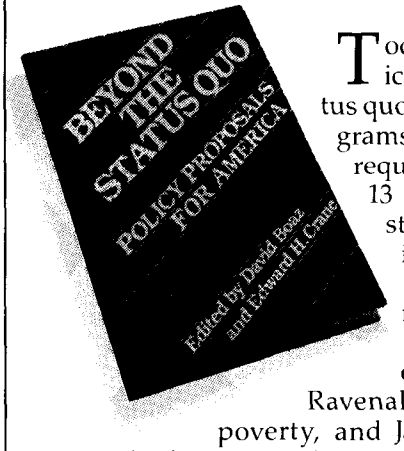

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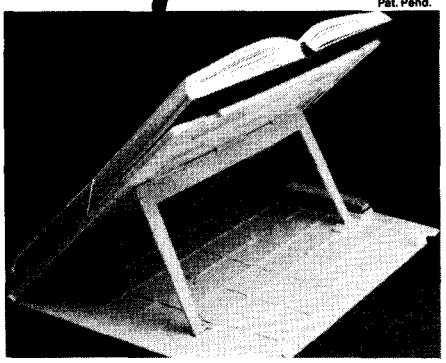

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their correspondence for this edition. Whether those letters will tell us more about the Jarrell who wrote the poems, and about the darkening of his last years, is a moot point. The lonely strain always audible in his poetry clearly surfaced in his life as he began to suffer manic-depressive illnesses in the 1960s. His friends—Lowell and Taylor among them—described his death in 1965 as a suicide. Mrs. Jarrell, in a lengthy day-by-day commentary on Jarrell's last hospitalization, presents it as an accident in which he was run down by a car while taking an early evening walk. The coroner judged it as accidental, or as the doctor in charge of the autopsy put it, there was "reasonable doubt about its being suicide." There are few clues in the letters, but from Jarrell's writing habits we do not even expect them. The real Jarrell is elsewhere—in the poems and in the privacies he never chooses to explore with the correspondents he addresses in this book.

DAVID KALSTONE

David Kalstone, professor of English at Rutgers, is the author of *Five Temperaments* (Oxford University Press) and a book about Elizabeth Bishop, *Becoming a Poet*, to be published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux next spring.

THE BRUISED APPLE

The Rise and Fall of New York City by Roger Starr

(Basic Books, 258 pp., $17.95)

At its best, *The Rise and Fall of New York City* is a cranky book of pessimistic exhaustion. At its worst, it lays New York's troubles at the doors of blacks, who figure in this book as inferior urban citizens. In passing, Roger Starr spends quite a lot of time accusing middle-class liberals of having coddled them into irremediable dependency.

I will confess that in the past I have had a few of my populist premises rattled by rigorous neoconservative writers like James Q. Wilson, Thomas Sowell, and Diane Ravitch. Roger Starr, however, is running on empty. His thinking is negative, reactive, and warped by a romanticized memory. Part of this book consists of Starr attacking personal demons, straw men, and dead horses. He kicks gays, feminists, rent control, Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Robert Caro, former mayor John Lindsay, affirmative action, welfare recipients, "people employed in the arts," and reformers, as if they all ran New York City today. And as if the banks, real estate developers, public authorities, political machines, power-brokering lawyers, campaign contributors, and newspaper publishers were the "outs," and had no control over public policy. Reading this rather churlish lament, the reader would hardly know that the author sits on *The New York Times* editorial board, and has endorsed all the incumbent elected rulers of the New York he now sees in ruins.

The other part of Starr's slim book consists of what purports to be a comprehensive, if casually presented, portrait of the city's rise and fall. He begins his book with a chapter on New York City's golden moment—February 12, 1946, when Mayor William O'Dwyer closed the city down and a Mardi Gras of joy and optimism filled the air. "New York stood at the very peak of its post-war power," Starr writes, "a day never again to be matched in the view it seemed to provide of the undaunted future of a city as powerful in its spirit as it was in its remarkedly diversified economy." Starr thinks New York City has gone steadily downhill from that glorious Athenian day and traces the decline, starting with an economic portrait that romanticizes the virtues of the past and suggests the problems of the present are insurmountable. But the heart of his analysis lies in his social portrait: the intractable source of the city's woes, according to Starr, is the in-migration of blacks, who lack self-discipline and suffer from an "oral tradition."

The most salient aspect of Starr's dis-

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cussion of the erosion of New York's geographical and manufacturing advantages and its housing predicament is his dire prognosis: New York is beyond repair. After lamenting the loss of New York's once-thriving harbor, Starr turns to the subway system and concludes on this note of despairing fatalism:

> . . . it will become increasingly difficult for the subway's managers to improve matters. Fewer and fewer talented people will assume the responsibility of directing major sectors of the Authority's work force and administration. . . . Thus, in the subways, the two worlds of New York collide: the working world that seems normal, and the never-working world of the criminals and the utterly helpless. In an older New York, these were kept separate. When they meet in the subway, it raises the possibility that the entire system will come, bit by bit, to a stop.

THE omissions in Starr's analysis of New York's problems are extraordinary. He does not place New York's decline in the context of the general economic plight of the entire Northeast slumbelt, which has lost jobs and wealth to the southwest Sunbelt. He assigns no blame to the Reagan administration's budget cuts, which have created six million poor people nationally and hundreds of thousands in New York City. He makes no reference to the growth of organized crime since 1946, and the mob's systemic role in heroin distribution; the pathology of crime-causing drugs is certainly a new element of urban unhappiness that earlier immigrant groups did not have to cope with.

Starr ignores the wave of landlord arson, which helped burn down the South Bronx and Bushwick—arson for profit, committed in order to get insurance proceeds, and sometimes for federal rehabilitation money to upgrade the same location that had been torched. (Joe Conason and I wrote a series of articles in *The Village Voice* about "fire broker" Joe Bald, who was eventually convicted, turned federal-informant, and helped to convict a dozen other landlords and lawyers of arson.) Starr feels no outrage toward the savings banks that redlined "changing neighborhoods," and caused a hemorrhage of capital. Starr does not analyze the white noose of the suburbs that tightens around New York's neck. He does not describe the clout of suburban power brokers in the state legislature, who for years have prevented the impo-

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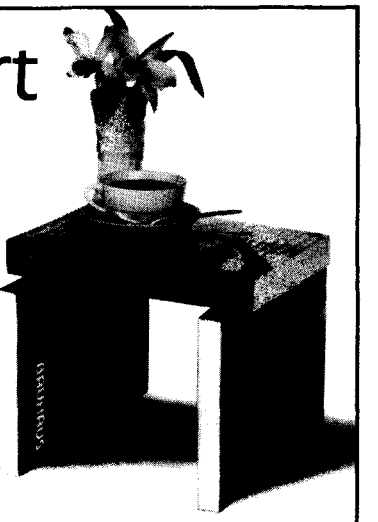

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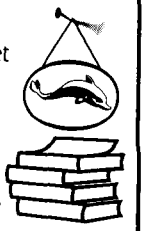

The World of Art...for more than meets the eye

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sition of a commuter tax on those affluent suburban residents who work in New York City, enjoy the city's pleasures, but won't pay a tax to slow the erosion of the city's tax base.

But the part of Roger Starr's analysis that best epitomizes the new conservative wisdom, and the single gravest failure of his book, is his treatment of the question of race. Starr begins the book by asserting that one of New York's most essential assets in 1946 "was its population, reasonably well educated by an effective school system, backed by the most comprehensive city system of higher education in the country." (He does not mention that the city's power brokers ended 125 years of immigrant upward mobility and free tuition at the City University during the fiscal crisis in 1976, at the very moment CUNY was becoming half black and Latin.) But the full implications of this view do not emerge until the book's central chapter, "Counting on People":

> One of the assets with which New York City expected to hold its position atop the postwar world was its remarkable population. . . . In the case of New York City, however, the stirrings of pride in the quality of its population were on the whole justified. New York's population, drawn mainly from the descendants of European immigrants, regarded itself as a major source of the city's growth. . . . What was not true was the belief that the population would retain its remarkable qualities forty years later. . . .
>
> Obviously, over forty years of the postwar period the number of nonwhite New Yorkers did increase dramatically. Their representation in the city's population grew from less than 10 percent to 30 or 40 . . .
>
> These changes in the population of the city reduced the size and shape of its greatest asset, created problems to which no solutions were apparent, and offered opportunities that were inadequately exploited.

In fact, all that Starr seems to be able to see are the insoluble problems; the inadequately exploited opportunities are nowhere in sight in his bleak analysis. For he proceeds to argue that "government handouts," such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children and affirmative action programs, "increase dependency," and this dependency is the reason "why the present population of New York City is not the asset that it once appeared to be."

No doubt there are valid criticisms of social policy in New York and elsewhere that come from the conservative camp. There has been rampant graft and outright crime in antipoverty programs. Two of the most powerful black politicians in Brooklyn (Sam Wright and Vander Beatty) have gone to prison for stealing from poverty programs. The current black candidate for mayor—Herman (Denny) Farrell—has controlled a community housing program that has been accused of fraud, and has done no good for the people in his district. Moreover, many liberals have been too rigidly sentimental in their reluctance about spending more public funds for prison construction and about supporting longer prison terms for violent recidivists.

Still, the pendulum has swung much too far to the right, and the skewed analysis that sees only failure in the social agenda of the last two decades should not be allowed to pass unchallenged. And lately it has been been subjected to thoughtful critiques, written in response to Charles Murray's influential version of that analysis in his book *Losing Ground*. Serious social problems do indeed still loom in cities across the country, as Murray, Starr, and others usefully remind those who might prefer to downplay them. But it is too simple to ascribe their persistence solely to the counterproductive effects of government social policies; as Christopher Jencks recently showed in *The New York Review of Books*, there's plenty of evidence to refute the case that helping the poor is really bad for them. Starr, revealingly, makes no case for those government programs that have been created specifically to end black dependency, stabilize the black family, and ease entry into the middle class: job training, aid to education, day care, nutrition, and economic development. Starr also tries to revive the old distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor, but then consigns the 600,000 children on welfare to the unworthy category.

WHERE Starr is willing to grant some sign of successful efforts, he does it in an exceedingly curious and backhanded way. He toys with the paradoxical idea that one cause of New York's decline is the progress in medicine and science, which has prolonged life among the poor. Sounding dourly Darwinian, Starr writes: "Life expectancy was much shorter in the cities of the nineteenth century. . . . With caution, one must wonder whether the higher death rate, winnowing with singular cruelty the ranks of the disorderly and poor urban masses, was not a very significant factor in making possible the achievement of a measure of civil peace in older cities . . ." Now Starr does go on to say that "such a hypothesis, even if it is correct, surely does not mean that the medical achievements that have lengthened life should be discarded." But it's hard to see what more enlightened theory this hypothesis is supposed to serve.

Starr has not merely misunderstood New York's present. He has misunder-

NO STEPS

The young bull dropped his head and stared.
Only a wispy wire—electrified—kept us
apart. That, and two long rows of asparagus.
An ancient apple tree
blossomed prodigally pink and white.

The muddy path sucked at my shoe,
but I reached the granite step, and knocked
at the rickety porch door.
Deep in the house a dog began to bark.
I had prepared my Heart Fund speech,
and the first word—*When*—was on my tongue.

I heard no steps—only the breeze
riffling the tender poplar leaves,
and a random, meditative moo
behind me. . . . Relieved, I turned back
to the car, passing once more
under the bull's judicial eye. . . .
Everything was intact: the canister,
still far too light and mute,
and metal boutonnières where they began—
in a zip-lock plastic sandwich bag.

JANE KENYON

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stood its past, too. He has simply romanticized it. He downplays the level of violence, crime, riots, strikes, and general incivility in old New York, when the underclass was Irish, Italian, and Jewish. He does talk about "family strains, rivalries," but the scene he paints is much tamer than it really was. I suggest that Starr read, if he hasn't already, Irving Howe's *World of Our Fathers*. Howe reminds us, for example, that "crime flourished in the Jewish immigrant quarters since the early 1880's," and that by 1906 "between 28 and 30 percent of all children" taken before juvenile court judges were Jewish.

Not quite a golden age, then.

Starr's hope for solutions is, it should be clear by now, all but nonexistent. He offers virtually no programmatic remedies, no original public policy ideas to improve the city's synergistic crises in housing, crime, public education, employment, transit, and race relations. The only concrete notion Starr shows any enthusiasm for is Representative Jack Kemp's dubious enterprise zones, as a tax-free sanctuary for business.

Meanwhile, his assessment of the city's current stewardship is singularly unimaginative. Naturally he can see no substantive reason why New York City's black population is not fond of Mayor Edward Koch. Starr himself doesn't like the mayor's "personal tolerance for unconventional behavior," or the mayor's honorable support for human rights for gays, or the mayor's commendable efforts to sexually integrate all-male private clubs. But Starr assures the reader that the real reason Koch is not popular among blacks is his "refusal to use the rhetoric of reassurance and kindly interest that blacks have come to expect. . . . no matter how Koch behaved nor how he talked to black people, the political importance of hating him would override any ingratiating manner."

But think, for a moment, of how New York might look through the eyes of its black population. As even Starr admits, the fact is that by every statistical measure the quality of life for blacks in New York is worse than the quality of life for whites. Black life expectancy is shorter by 12 to 14 years. Black unemployment is twice as high. Black infant mortality in Harlem is four times higher than it is on the East Side. The high school dropout rate for blacks is twice that of whites.

Blacks and Latins feel unrepresented in New York. Blacks are about 35 percent of the population, and Latins about 15 percent. The city's governing body—the Board of Estimate—is 100 percent white. Starr writes that "the election of black politicians to high office in districts in which many whites vote is a heartening sign of progress in race relations." But the fact is that in the year 1985 in the city of New York there is not one black (or Latin) legislator elected from a jurisdiction or district that has a white voting majority. Not one out of more than 100 elected city, state, federal, and borough-wide offices is held by a black or Latin elected by whites. Imagine if this were reversed. Imagine if the mayor, comptroller, City Council president, and all five borough presidents were black. Would not the city's white population feel insecure and uneasy?

When Mayor Koch decided, for reasons of austerity, to close a public hospital in 1979, he chose to close Sydenham Hospital in the middle of Harlem, one of the most medically underserved neighborhoods in America. When the city's health commissioner used the word "nigger" in a public meeting,

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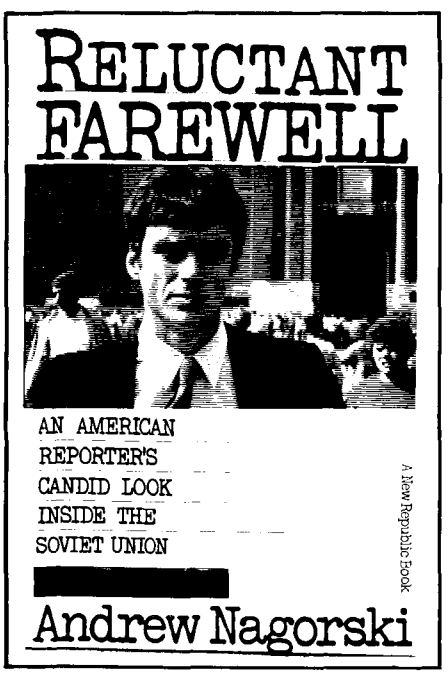

Andrew Nagorski was *Newsweek*'s Moscow bureau chief until his expulsion for "impermissible journalistic activities" in August 1982. His engaging book is as much about the difficulties that face reporters who seek honestly to cover Soviet society as it is about the country itself. Nagorski is currently *Newsweek*'s Bonn bureau chief.

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Simon Leys is the author of several books, including the widely acclaimed *Chinese Shadows*, which Mary McCarthy called "a masterpiece." It was hailed by Irving Howe as "a brilliant, lively, amusing, clever, moving, and above all truth-telling book." Leys currently teaches Chinese language and literature at the Australian National University in Canberra.

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Mayor Koch refused to fire him. When moderate blacks like Carl McCall and David Dinkins ran for higher office, Mayor Koch endorsed their less capable opponents. In 1981 Mayor Koch signed into law a redistricting plan for the City Council that Ronald Reagan's Justice Department threw out because it discriminated against minority voters. In 1983 Mayor Koch backed his white deputy, Robert Wagner Jr., for schools chancellor over qualified black and Hispanic alternatives; the state's education commissioner had to intervene and rule that Wagner lacked the minimum legal qualifications for the job.

This is not to suggest that the cure for the city's crisis lies simply in more political power for black faces. Ken Gibson hasn't redeemed Newark, and Denny Farrell won't save New York. But Starr's pessimism and chiding moralism don't, in the end, serve to chart a better-marked path of recovery than the liberal optimism and moral relativism he condemns. Perhaps conservatives need to learn the lesson of their own pessimism: New York is never going to be a tidy, homogeneous, efficient place.

At bottom, the problem with Starr's book is that he dislikes New York. He dislikes diversity, and diversity is the essence of the city—and part of the reason its problems are so big. The solutions aren't going to be clear-cut. But it's important to stop thinking in the categories of victim and victimizers, and worth collecting concrete ideas from all sides, not just abstract laments from one corner. New York's civic groups, think tanks, universities, and activists generate a constant flow of specific reform ideas that struggle for a hearing. Adam Walinsky's admirable proposal for a police corps has been endorsed by William Buckley. A housing trust fund, financed by luxury developers, to rehabilitate and build moderate-income units has been put forward by Ron Schiffman of Pratt Institute. Some community groups argue that a development bank could be started with surplus funds from the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) and the bond-rich Port Authority. Mass transit advocates want Westway funds to be traded in for subway and bus money before the September 30 deadline. (Westway is a real estate deal disguised as a highway.) The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) and city councilmember Ruth Messinger have offered a comprehensive tax reform agenda that would increase revenue by ending preferences for booming sectors of the municipal economy, like stock traders and real estate developers. Hunter College president Donna Shalala says public school should start at age three. Obviously, proposals like these don't spell a renaissance for New York. But Rome wasn't built, or rebuilt, in a day.

JACK NEWFIELD

Jack Newfield is a senior editor of *The Village Voice*.

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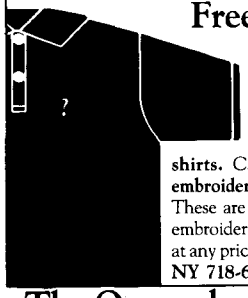

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A DOG'S WORST ENEMY

Dominance and Affection: The Making of Pets by Yi-Fu Tuan

(Yale University Press, 192 pp., $19.95)

What links bonsai trees, poodles, the concubines of the emperor of China, and the liveried dwarfs who waited at the courts of Renaissance princes? The answer, according to Yi-Fu Tuan, is that they are all human artifacts, twisted out of their natural shapes so as to please our tastes. The bonsai was carefully pruned and wired, its roots never allowed to touch the solid earth, so that it would grow in the right direction. The poodle, originally a hunting dog, became a fashionable pet during the reign of Louis XVI when poodle barbers began clipping poodle hair into monograms and lovers' knots. Chinese emperors of the Tang dynasty preferred women whose feet had, in infancy, been bound tightly enough to produce an abnormal shape. Court dwarfs were born rather than made, but in Renaissance Italy the princes tried to breed them so as to obtain more of these novel servants; and in any case, to search the city for dwarfs and turn them into a kind of court pet is already to create an artifact.

Loaves of bread, clothing, and houses are also artifacts; but they are, at least in their basic forms, made to serve our physical needs for food, warmth, and shelter. The previous list is different because it consists of things that we make to please our apparently purposeless fantasies. Why do we bother? Tuan's answer: to exercise our power over nature. The basic drive is dominance. It is not so much the shape of the tree, the dog, the foot, or the dwarf; it is the fact that we have bent something to our will.

There is more to it still. The drive to dominate is not, in these instances, pure ruthless power. It lives alongside some of the gentlest and finest aspects of human nature; alongside affection,

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and even love; alongside a desire for harmless fun; alongside a cultivated and refined aesthetic sense. The interplay of these desires is the theme of Tuan's book.

This theme is pursued assiduously through a wide range of examples. When Louis XIV was advised not to build his palace and gardens at the barren, waterless site of Versailles, the Sun King replied: "It is in overcoming difficult matters that we make apparent our power." Make apparent his power he certainly did: within a few years, thanks to 40 miles of canals and aqueducts built by 30,000 soldiers, the palace, gardens, and fountains of Versailles were consuming more water than the city of Paris, with its 600,000 people. In a very different culture, Kublai Khan impressed his visitors—Marco Polo among them—by having a lion led into his presence. As soon as the king of beasts saw the Khan, it flung itself prostrate before him, and remained there throughout the audience.

Such exhibitions of dominance are obvious enough. The significance of *Dominance and Affection* lies in the way Tuan traces the same tendency in more innocent activities. We shower our dogs and cats with love and affection; yet our relations with pets cannot be understood, Tuan suggests, unless we recognize that cruelty to animals is deeply embedded in human nature.

THIS MAY be right; but I find it curious that Tuan chooses to illustrate this cruelty by the practices of the Bushmen of the Kalahari and the Eskimo of the Arctic. Why not take an example nearer home? Would it not have been illuminating to place beside the cruelty of the hunting practices of the Eskimo (who after all have little choice but to use every possible method to trap game) the technologically enhanced heights of cruelty that lead us to take unweaned veal calves from their mothers, lock them into stalls too narrow for them to turn around in, and feed them a diet deliberately deficient in iron and roughage so that their anemic flesh will be pale and soft? Tuan's omission of such practices, perhaps the most ruthless forms of total control over another living being yet devised, indicates that it is much easier to recognize the cruelties of other societies than those of our own.

And what of pets? The intertwining of affection and dominance is especially close here. It is easy for Tuan to show that we breed dogs into sizes and shapes that please us, not the dogs. Dogs have long been possessions, things to show off, prized for their obedience and loyalty to their masters. That much may be granted. Unfortunately Tuan does not seem interested in asking whether this is a universal or necessary aspect of living with a dog.

In the animal liberation movement, the term "pet" has now been replaced by "companion animal," or perhaps even "the dog I live with." Is this still dominance under another name, or is a new and more equal relationship possible? Of course a domesticated animal kept as a companion will still be dependent on the human; from this situation there is no escape, and any "equality" in the relationship is always within these limits. But the limits are not set by the human who has a dog or cat as a companion, and hence need not imply a desire to dominate on the part of the human. If the freedom of the animal is constricted by the human, the human also accepts constraints: to be home when the animal needs to be fed, not to live in apartment buildings that do not allow animals, not to go on holidays where the animal cannot go. All this suggests an element of equality that is certainly not typical of the "owner-pet" rela-

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tionship, but which could profitably have been discussed as an alternative to it.

Gardens and pets are not the only objects of dominance Tuan discusses. His concluding chapters reveal how children, wives, slaves, dwarfs, and fools can also be "pets." The binding practiced on the feet of Chinese women is an extreme example, but we can easily recognize the pet relationship in the type of marriage portrayed in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, when Nora says to her husband: "Our home has never been anything but a playroom. I've been your doll-wife, just as at home I was Papa's doll-child." It would be naive to think that such marriages no longer exist.

The strength of *Dominance and Affection* is that it brings out the underlying continuity of the way all humans have used their power over other beings in their control. Is this inevitable? Tuan says it is, dominance being both necessary and desirable because it is "a vital sign of life." We must use and control nature in order to live. Tuan is, in other words, asking us to recognize that the fashionable attitude to dominance is simplistic: we cannot simply reject dominances as a whole, because it is so bound up with everything we do.

Tuan allows that things are not always quite so grim. He recognizes that the abuse of power is not inevitable; power genuinely may be used for the good of another, not for one's own benefit. But this is, Tuan says, "an act so rare as to escape the coarse observational net of social science." Is it really? Or has Tuan simply not cast his net in that particular direction? His book does not allow us to tell.

PETER SINGER

Peter Singer is professor of philosophy at Monash University in Australia and the co-author of *Making Babies: The New Science and Ethics of Conception* (Scribners).

CORRECTION

In Leon Wieseltier's review of Harold Brodkey's *Women and Angels*, the word "*voici*" was misspelled in the quotation from the poem "Jewlove."

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Women and Angels by Harold Brodkey (The Jewish Publication Society of America). Two ordinary fragments of a long-awaited novel, and a third remarkable one: the portrait of a revelation. (Reviewed 5/20/85)

Acts of Will: The Life and Work of Otto Rank by E. James Lieberman M.D. (Free Press). Another chapter in the history of psychoanalysis. (5/20/85)

The Call: An American Missionary in China by John Hersey (Knopf). An unsentimental saga of one Christian's half-century in China. (5/13/85)

Mountbatten: A Biography by Philip Ziegler (Knopf). The aristocrat as ambitious, accomplished statesman. (5/13/85)

Money: A Suicide Note by Martin Amis (Viking). The manic monologue of a man who has everything but is nothing. (5/6/85)

The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan by Steven L. Spiegel (University of Chicago Press). An exhaustive, objective map of the maneuvers and muddles. (5/13/85)

Shah of Shahs by Ryszard Kapuściński, translated by William R. Brand and Katarzyna Mroczkowska-Brand (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich). A tale of tyranny, set in Iran. (4/8/85)

Harry Emerson Fosdick: Preacher, Pastor, Prophet by Robert Moats Miller (Oxford University Press). The life, times, and crusades of the liberal, ever active minister. (5/6/85)

The Kindness of Strangers: The Life of Tennessee Williams by Donald Spoto (Little, Brown). A thorough life of the carousing playwright. (5/13/85)

Home Truths: Sixteen Stories by Mavis Gallant (Random House). Portraits of Canadians at home and abroad. (5/13/85)

TRB, *from page 4*

they can't easily be disconnected.

Something about seat belts gets people's libertarian juices flowing. Society has a valid interest in saving lives, it's argued, but in this case the life you risk by not buckling up is your own. People are entitled to "the freedom to be foolish," as James J. Kilpatrick put it in a recent column. Safety proponents counter that auto deaths and injuries impose costs on society, too, especially in these days of almost universal medical insurance, and that this justifies society in trying to save you from harm even if you're not interested. Both sides in this debate are being disingenuous. The motive behind mandatory seat belts and passive restraints is thoroughly paternalistic: imposing good behavior on you for your own good. On the other hand, few people who choose not to buckle up have made a rational calculation that the added risk to them is not worth the inconvenience.

Freedom is not indivisible, and the freedom to do what no sensible person should wish to do—drive without a seat belt—does not rank very high on my list. Compare this to the freedom—to drink—being denied to more and more of the nation's 18- to 21-year-olds, only a tiny minority of whom ever abuse the privilege by driving drunk. (True, drunk drivers endanger others besides themselves, but the vast majority of victims are the drunks themselves.) And this to save a tenth of the lives that could be saved by requiring people to buckle up.

Moving along the road to serfdom from mandatory seat belt laws to passive restraints, the freedom trade-off gets costlier. Automatic seat belts would cost everyone $40, and the only people whose safety would be increased are those who otherwise would break the law to avoid the inconvenience of buckling up. Going all the way to air bags would cost everyone an additional $280 and would only add protection for those who hate seat belts so much they would go to the trouble of disconnecting the automatic kind. It seems to me that such people really have made a conscious, if not rational, decision to risk their lives rather than muss their clothes, and they are entitled to live with it. That's why I come down in favor of mandatory or automatic seat belts.

And come to think of it, after 20 years of debate, that's where we seem to be heading. Maybe democracy works after all.

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

No Dogs or Journalists

TNR HAS BEEN getting a lot of ink lately, and much of it concerns our political direction. Are we "drifting to the right"? Although we enjoy the publicity, we're finding the debate over labels a bit tiresome. My own opinion: the general indictment is undeniably true, but many of the specific charges are bum raps. For example, I recently found myself defending the Justice Department's breakup of AT&T to someone who exclaimed, "My God, you people really have become Reaganites." Some Democrats have tried to make an issue of the breakup, and from their point of view TNR is on the "wrong" side. But that strikes me as their problem, not ours. Imagine if you were asked to guess, even ten years ago, which party would initiate the government-imposed dismantling of the largest corporation on earth, and which party would object to it. I know I would have guessed wrong. What is so "conservative" about supporting this long-standing populist dream, and what is so "liberal" about opposing it? The same is true of other Reagan initiatives that TNR has supported. We support David Stockman's attempts to curtail the farm price support program, for example, because it seems insane to raise the cost of food and burden the average taxpayer in order to benefit a group of people with an average net worth of more than $300,000. We support the Reagan Treasury tax reform plan—at least the first version—because it closes loopholes for the rich, shifts the tax burden from labor to capital, and gives the biggest break to the working poor. Why is that "conservative"?

NEVERTHELESS, the joke around this office is that maybe we should change our name to "Even the Liberal New Republic." That's because every time we take one of these seemingly conservative positions (or, for that matter, other positions that would be hard to give any other truthful label to), we are hailed by some conservative politician or editorialist with the declaration that "even the liberal New Republic" supports the nostrum in question. ("I don't know if any of you have ever heard of a magazine called The New Republic, but . . ." is the dispiriting way then-Treasury Secretary Donald Regan bragged about our endorsement of his tax plan to a group of reporters several months ago.) There has been some speculation here about how long this trick would continue to work—when, that is, the novelty would start to wear thin. Now, though, the rhetorical device has taken on an unexpected new life. Representative Mickey Leland, a liberal Democrat from Texas, recently distributed to his House colleagues a TRB column opposing the Reagan administration's so-called "constructive engagement" policy toward South Africa and urging a more militant approach. In a cover letter, Leland noted that this column appeared in "the conservative New Republic." In other words, Even the Conservative New Republic favors sanctions against South Africa.

THE REVISED administration tax reform plan, due out any minute, looks to be vastly inferior to the original. Although other loopholes Reagan has decided to restore involve more money and less worthy beneficiaries, in some ways the most shameful lobbying victory has been that of charitable institutions fighting (with apparent success) to preserve the tax break for donations of appreciated property. This isn't the basic charitable deduction, which Reagan also has decided to preserve. That's defensible. This is something else. The idea of the charitable deduction is that you shouldn't pay taxes on money you give away. But when you give away stocks or paintings or whatever that have increased in value since you acquired them, you don't pay taxes on the increase, and you get the deduction *anyway*. It's like getting to deduct part of your contribution twice. No one has ever come up with an intellectually coherent reason for this rule, because there is none. It's only in the tax code by accident. Yet educational leaders—led by Presidents Derek Bok of Harvard and William Bowen of Princeton—have been invoking the intellectual prestige of their institutions to preserve this double break for rich people who donate property to their institutions. "Charitable giving is highly responsive to its net cost," Bok and Bowen assert in one piece of propaganda. In accompanying documents, they explain how a wealthy taxpayer can now give property to Harvard for a "net cost" of as little as 32 cents on the dollar, whereas under the Treasury plan such generosity would cost 65 cents or more. By this logic, why not allow rich people to deduct their charitable contributions *three* times? This would reduce their "net cost" to nothing, which surely is the least we can do to encourage their enormous benevolence. Meanwhile, though, consistency requires that Harvard and Princeton use this notion of "net cost" when celebrating the generosity of their alumni. I look forward to press releases reporting that "Arthur B. Moneybags has donated one million dollars to endow the Moneybags Professorship in fast-food marketing, at a cost to himself of $350,000 and to the government of $650,000." And plaques around campus: "Richfellow Hall, built through the generous contribution of W. Johnson Richfellow, Class of 1958, at a net cost of only 32 cents on the dollar."

WHEN A FRIEND of mine in the Reagan administration got promoted to a job on the presidential staff a while back, I waited a decent interval before asking the really burning question that everyone wants to pose to their friends at the center of power. "When do I get lunch at the White House mess?" I mean, what's the point of drifting to the right if you have to hoard the White House matchbooks you filched during the Carter administration? In those days, there was always a friendly welcome and an extra place at the plain oak picnic table where barefoot aides sat devouring ham hocks and grits, swapping yarns, belching, and picking their teeth with a bit of straw. I knew the place had gotten tonier, but I was shocked when my friend admitted, with embarrassment, that he couldn't invite me to lunch. Why not? "There's a rule: no journalists allowed." O.K., so our table manners aren't great. Still, this rule strikes me as a grave error, if not actually unconstitutional. Is it really worth insulting the Fourth Estate just to create an upscale dining environment and save on matchbooks?

M.E.K.

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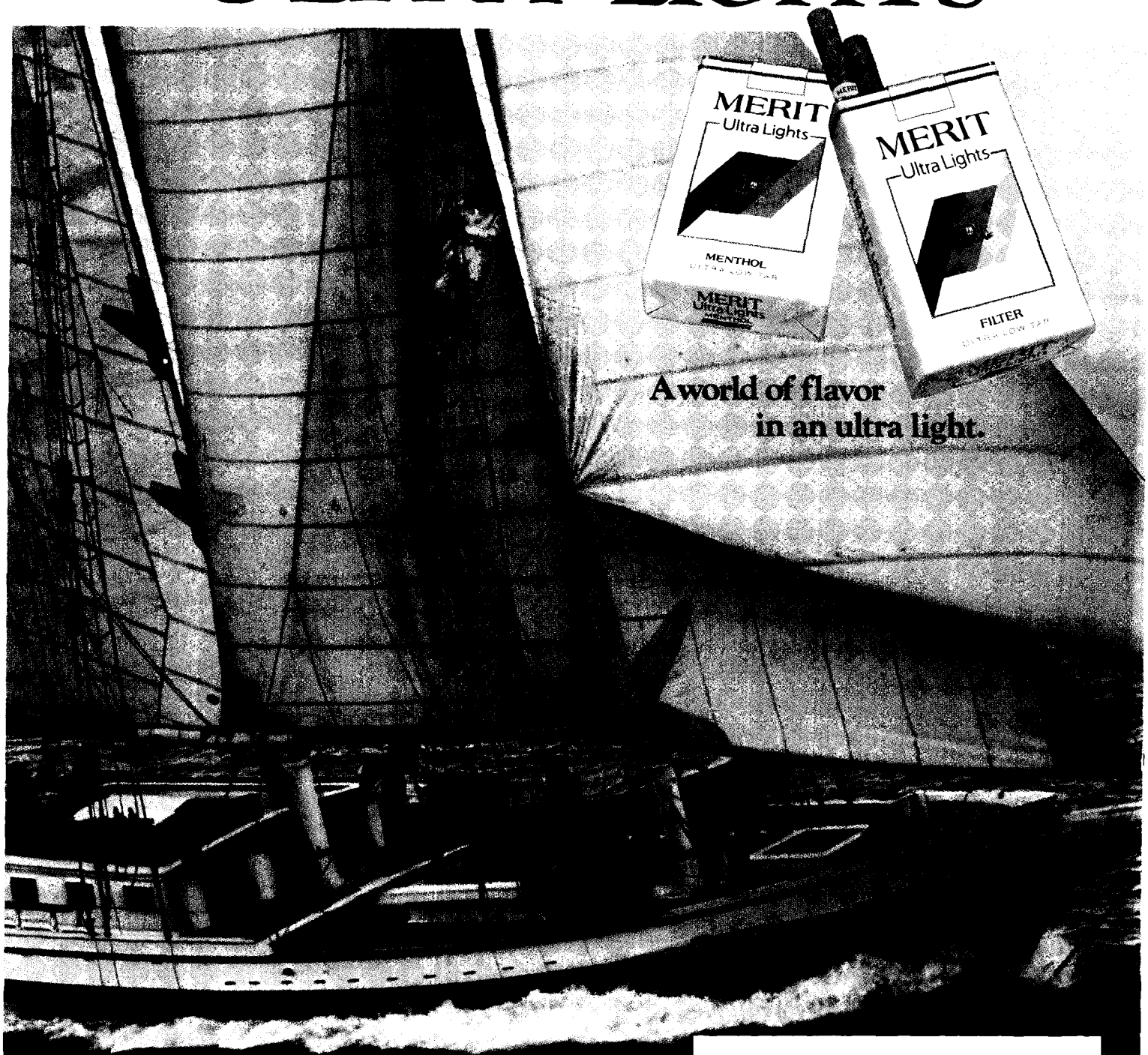

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